

Love ONE ANOTHER

BY: ARCHBISHOP JEROME E. LISTECKI



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Dear ,

The terrible violence inflicted upon our young people in Florida is symptomatic of the psychology of our culture. Various solutions will be put forth. Ban assault weapons, monitor the information on the internet, encourage students to report suspicious behavior among their peers – all of these suggestions are merely a bandage upon a tumor that's affecting our society. What person sells an assault weapon to an 18-year-old? What person engages in a chat room, speaking with someone who claims they will commit mass murder? Peers knew of this crazed individual, yet alerting the authorities seemed like a betrayal of peer relations.

A tumor must be excised, and that tumor is a lack of respect for life itself. We have lost the priority of God in our daily lives. It's difficult to participate in evil when you know there is a God who will call you to judgement. Jesus came as our Savior and Redeemer, but if no one sins, why do we need a redeemer?

I attended the Right to Life March in Washington, D.C. Hundreds of thousands of young people marched, but they were largely ignored by the media. Many of the young now proclaim that they are the generation who survived the U.S abortion laws. Their own nation did not protect them in the womb. I, like many throughout our nation, mourned with our brothers and sisters in Florida, but hundreds of young people die in the streets of Chicago due to drugs and gang warfare.

Are our public schools broken? Our traditional family support seems to have disappeared. We talk about mental illness and that we should do more to address this problem, but I have worked with many who are mentally ill, and they are not committing these crimes against humanity. We need to assist

them, because they are our brothers and sisters and are deserving of our respect. Where do we find our hope?

This last Sunday at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, I presided over the Rite of Election in our Archdiocese of Milwaukee. The Cathedral was almost filled, and there will be two more presentations. I was amazed at the numbers and variety of people who were coming forward, claiming their allegiance to Jesus Christ in His Church. Men and women, young and old, every racial and ethnic type – all found hope in the Lord Jesus, and were exercising their public commitment. Priests, sponsors and family members accompanied them on this journey. This was inspiring. These individuals, for a variety of reasons, found a relationship with Jesus, giving meaning to their lives.

Our society is often embarrassed by any public declaration of faith (just observe the squeamishness of a sports reporter in an interview of a successful athlete, or news reporter covering an event when Jesus or God is mentioned). However, the answer to the illness of our society is not excising God from our vocabulary or the practice of faith from our lives, but rather inviting a commitment to God, which creates an environment that transforms lives and offers hope.

There is no easy pill to swallow that will change the brokenness in our society. But, a commitment and witnessing to God is the only true healing that can transform a people to LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

Decide to Lead,

Most Reverend Jerome E. ListECKi

Archbishop of Milwaukee


