



Greetings,

The Sisters of St. Agnes are making the following public statement in response to the Parkland school shooting and the March for Our Lives taking place across the country this Saturday.

**Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Statement on Gun Control Legislation**

The Sisters of St. Agnes join their voices with those of the surviving students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, those who participated in Saturday's national and local March for Our Lives, and people of good will from all faiths across this country, who are demanding an end to the legislative paralysis that prevents common sense gun control from being enacted in this country.

Between the Sandy Hook shooting, and the Parkland shooting more than 500,000 Americans have been killed or injured by guns. There have been more than 1,500 mass shooting incidents in the United States during that time. The annual number of gun deaths increased to more than 38,000 in 2016. Of the 30 deadliest shootings in the United States, 19 have occurred in the last 10 years. As part of this litany of senseless gun deaths, we also acknowledge the deaths of our African American sisters and brothers that gave birth to the Black Lives Matter movement.

We acknowledge and thank those corporations that have recently severed ties with the NRA, but the reality is little has been done to address the gun violence epidemic in our nation. Our legislators have not only refused to act to address gun violence in the United States, they – under increased pressure and funding from the NRA – have actively worked to weaken gun regulations.

The Sisters of St. Agnes call for an open and respectful dialogue in our communities, our states, and Congress about effective gun control legislation. We seek legislation that protects the common good and public safety as well as promotes respect for life. We call our elected officials to develop legislation and enact laws that will: require universal background checks and mandatory waiting periods for all gun purchases; ban civilian ownership of high-capacity weapons and ammunition magazines; make gun trafficking a federal crime; and improve access to mental health services.

This tragic event calls communities and the nation to a deep conversion as individuals, communities, and as a nation. May we heed the challenge in the compelling words of Pope Francis, "Faith and violence are incompatible."

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