



A Message from the Bishop of Southeast Florida  
after further violence in the country

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We prepare to gather for the Sunday Eucharist this weekend in the wake of yet more violence and death in our nation, and there is no doubt that we are living in unprecedented times for our country, for the world, and for the Church. Wherever we turn, we are either terrified or sickened, and there seems to be no comfort or safety. We shall pray once again this weekend for those who have died or been wounded by acts of human violence, and our hearts go out to the grieving. There seems to be no end of this.

One of the hardest things for us to realize is that the violence, prejudice, and arbitrariness that we have been witnessing in our communities for months now is not new. The terrible truth is that our black and brown sisters and brothers, our LGBT sisters and brothers, the working poor, the homeless, so many abused women, countless trafficked children, and all who are members of groups that are disadvantaged, discriminated against, or vulnerable know that all kinds of violence that we never see has been going on in our communities for generations.

The normalization of violence, systemic racism, and epidemic poverty and their consequences are a lethal threat to any civilized society. Nowhere should it be acceptable that the sound of children playing in the streets of our residential neighborhoods should be ousted by the sound of gunfire.

We who have committed ourselves to Jesus Christ know, as the words of an old prayer have it, that God has created this world for his glory, and for joy without end. We are convinced that by taking on all the worst of our human life and what we are capable of doing to each other, Jesus has robbed sin and death of their power over us. And because Jesus has done this, we are free to be the human beings we are created to be, and that there is a different way to live.

What is astonishing is that God trusts us enough to have given into our hands this creation, and the task of being co-creators with God of a world in which the values of the Kingdom are no dream, but a reality for all.

May God give us all the strength and the grace of the Good Samaritan, whose story we shall hear again tomorrow at the Liturgy, to act as those who believe in the resurrection, and who know that nothing is stronger than the love of God.

With every blessing.

*+Peter*

*Bishop of Southeast Florida*