



Response to the Mass Shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada

October 3, 2017—We, the members of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago, add our voices of lament and outrage following the mass shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada. We remember with gratitude and bitter sorrow the victims of this wanton act of violence. We pray for comfort and hope for the families and friends of those killed and wounded.

We also remember our sorrow just last year following the mass shooting in Orlando, Florida. Las Vegas has now supplanted Orlando as our nation's worst mass shooting. Unless we change our national response, we expect that a new grim record will be set sooner than later.

For almost two decades this Council has called on state and federal legislatures to adopt life-affirming gun control legislation. We recognize that such legislation must respect the needs and concerns of law-abiding gun owners. Yet the "right to bear arms" does not override the sanctity of human life, nor does it in any way lessen the responsibility of public servants to protect that sacred gift in our communities.

We therefore renew our call for strengthening the ban on the civilian sale, possession, and use of all "assault weapons" and other rapid-fire, anti-personnel weapons.

We further call upon members of our religious communities to consider the demonstrated risks and dangers of assault weapons and, as an affirmation of the sanctity of life and a tribute to the fallen in Las Vegas, to remove such weapons from our homes and households.

Finally, we call upon all citizens to reaffirm our responsibility for the welfare of our neighbors and our communities. In these ways may we build peace in our nation and our world.

Bishop Wayne N. Miller, President