



## DIOCESE OF PATERSON

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OFFICE OF  
THE BISHOP

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On this past Tuesday, we were made painfully aware of another horrific act of violence and the tragic loss of innocent human life that followed. The school shooting in Uvalde, Texas repeated an all too familiar scene that pours salt in a wound that never seems to heal. As we pray for all the victims, especially the 19 children and 2 teachers who were killed, we must constantly pray for their families that will never be the same and for healing in our country that desperately needs the peace that comes from God. We must also ask ourselves the questions, "How can this happen again (and again and again)?" This tragic killing, with the use of a deadly weapon, comes less than two weeks after another person with a gun targeted an African-American Community in Buffalo and killed 10 innocent people.

We raise our voices, as we must, on behalf of the intrinsic dignity and value of all human life, recommitting ourselves to the work of peace by calling all citizens, elected and religious leaders, and all people of good will to look at the root causes of these violent acts. Working together, regardless of political affiliation, to enact laws and provide services that will prevent the repetition of this senseless violence are crucial steps toward unraveling the violence that is being woven into our national life with horrifying frequency.

On this weekend when, as a Church, we celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord into heaven and, as a nation, we pause to remember those who have given their lives in the service of our country, let us pray that all our beloved deceased will know the fullness of life in heaven and let us pray and work, so that God will bring peace and healing to our nation. As we seek the healing of heaven, we pray to do God's work on earth and we take encouragement in the words of our Risen Lord: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John16:33).

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Kevin J. Sweeney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The plus sign is at the beginning, followed by the first name "Kevin", the middle initial "J.", and the last name "Sweeney".

Most Reverend Kevin J. Sweeney, D.D.  
Bishop of Paterson