

IHM Leadership Council Statement on Gun Violence

Urged by the love of God, the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Monroe, Michigan, a congregation of 387 vowed members and 123 associates, choose to work with others to build a culture of peace and right relationship. It is from this place that we express our grave concern for the pervasiveness of gun violence in the United States. The IHM community was personally touched by gun violence in the 1980s when Sister John Clement Hungerman, IHM, was shot and killed in a mugging adjacent to the Marygrove College campus and, more recently, two sophomore high school students of our sponsored school, Detroit Cristo Rey, were lost to gun violence: one in October, Ileana Cuevas, and one in November, Shane Glover. Gun violence has touched the lives of many in our community, both directly and indirectly.

Gun violence is taking a huge toll on our society. More than 11,000 people are killed with guns in the United States every year. We are becoming desensitized to the ever-presence of violence in our media, movies and public life, much of which is associated with guns. Furthermore, the accessibility of guns, especially large-capacity ammunition magazines, causes more people to be killed or injured when acts of violence are committed.

It has been more than a month since the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary. Without strong leadership we will all too soon slip back into resigned tolerance of gun violence – as we did following the high-profile killings in Aurora, Tucson, Oak Creek, Fort Hood, Virginia Tech and Columbine. Therefore, the IHM Leadership Council joins the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, NETWORK Catholic Social Justice Lobby and people of faith all over the country in calling on Congress to pass legislation which

- Requires universal background checks for all gun purchases
- Bans semi-automatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazines
- Makes gun trafficking a federal crime
- Improves access to mental health services

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “The time is always right to do what is right.” Now is the time for our nation’s leaders to take decisive action that emphasizes public safety, security and promotes sustainable solutions to the pervasive culture of violence in our country and around the world.

The IHM Leadership Council

Margaret Alandt, IHM
Mary Ann Bredice, IHM
Mary Jane Herb, IHM
Sharon Holland, IHM
Helen Ingles, IHM
Patricia McCluskey, IHM

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Monroe, Michigan
Feb. 5, 2013