



THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA

“Wisdom is better than weapons of war, yet one wrongdoer can undo much good.”
Ecclesiastes 9:18

“Then Jesus said to him, ‘Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.’”
Matthew 26:52

“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ To the contrary, ‘if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”
Romans 12:19-21

SISTERS TAKE CORPORATE STAND AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE (2019)

We, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, choose to live the Gospel in the prophetic spirit of Francis of Assisi and our foundress, Mother Francis Bachmann. With Jesus Christ as Brother, we live as sister with one another, with the entire human family, and with all creation. Calling ourselves and one another to continuous conversion of heart we commit ourselves to a life of contemplation, poverty and humility. Seeking to participate in the Spirit’s action in the world, we direct our personal and corporate resources to the promotion of justice, peace, and reconciliation.

Constitutions

Ministry #22 – Because the Gospel calls us to be peacemakers, we actively work to overcome the divisions which separate persons, groups, and nations. We honestly search out and seek to address the violence and injustice within ourselves, our relationships, and our structures.

Ministry #23 – United with our sisters and brothers, we work for systemic change in institutions and organizations that perpetuate conditions that are inconsistent with the Gospel message of peace with justice.

Directives

#23.1 – As sisters in the human family we speak out against political, ecclesial and corporate systems that engender violence or abuse human rights.

These and other statistics are breathtaking! They challenge the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and their companions to do what we can to bring to light the enormity and the costs of human life because of the lack of adequate gun safety reform. Furthermore, our documents, our values, and the Gospel call us to educate ourselves and to put that knowledge into action on behalf of our brothers and sisters. This is our call; this is our challenge. Let us strive to be women and men of peace by our work toward fair and adequate legislation on gun safety reform.

RATIONALE

- Eight hundred years and the shining witness of St. Francis of Assisi has scarcely dimmed. His example teaches us of his journey from violence to nonviolence, wealth to poverty, pride to humility, power to powerlessness, selfishness to service, indifference to love, cruelty to compassion, and killing enemies to loving them. This is the powerful witness of the poor man from Assisi;
- Gun violence is a leading cause of premature death in our country;
- There is an epidemic of violence that directly threatens our human right to be safe and secure and to live without fear;
- Fueling this epidemic, laws on guns in the U.S. are inconsistent and weak and federal, state, and local governments are not meeting their obligation under international law to protect people's safety;
- As Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and our companions, we are called to continue to take the necessary risks and to advocate for stricter gun safety laws.

STATEMENT

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, conscious of the growing use of assault and other weapons in our society, take a corporate stand on behalf of gun safety reform thereby committing to educate ourselves and others toward a culture of life.

ACTION STEPS

- Participate, when able, in local witness events calling for an end to gun violence;
- Advocate for extensive and up-to-date background checks on people purchasing guns;
- Register to vote and vote to elect those who support gun safety reform;
- Consider volunteering with organizations who support gun safety reform;
- Educate yourself by reading and by signing letters, e-mails, and making phone calls to your Senators and Representatives;
- Include gun safety reform in your daily prayers.
- Use shares in corporations such as Wells Fargo, Sturm Ruger, and others to address the morality and business case within the gun industry.
- Avoid shopping in stores that sell guns.