



From the Office of the President

John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.

REGIS UNIVERSITY | DENVER, COLORADO

How do we respond? How do we heal?

August 6th, 2019

Members of the Regis University Community:

With you, I grieve. I feel intensely the pain of loss as well as deep anger - even outrage - at the hateful violence this past week in El Paso, TX, Dayton, OH, and Gilroy, CA. To date, we know that at least 32 people have died and 66 have been injured. We know that the El Paso shooting was the work of a young man who embraced racist ideology, white nationalism, and lived in despair of his future.

The lamentation from the Psalm 13 comes to mind: "How long, O Lord?" Yet lamentation is not enough; positive, constructive action arising from our better selves, our Godly selves, is required.

Let me state what we all already know:

- White supremacy is an assault on the Word of God, which declares that every person is created in the image of God, worthy of dignity and respect.
- The continual murder of innocents in our homes and on our streets is a uniquely American tragedy born of fear and inaction of leaders who would rather protect an industry than protect human lives.

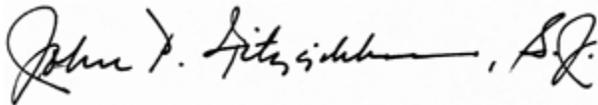
Let me state what we ask for:

- We call upon our Congress to act now to eliminate civilian access to military-type weaponry, large capacity magazines, and enact common sense gun safety legislation such as gun licensure.
- We call upon our President to denounce - openly and overtly - acts of domestic terrorism, white supremacy, and racism.
- We call upon the President to repudiate his own racist and incendiary statements.
- We call upon the President to realize that by inaction he is permitting, if not promoting, the loss of innocent life and our nation's reputation.
- We call upon all of us in the Regis University community to uphold the dignity of every human being, to reject racism, and to share responsibility for the work of creating a safe community.



As I wrote in 2017, in the [University Statement of Principles](#), "We believe the University serves not only itself and its students but is called to be a force for justice and peace in society, above all, in defense of the poor and marginalized. For us, to seek the 'greater glory of God' is to bear responsibility for the most pressing issues of our time." With these words I invite you to participate in conversations to be co-hosted by the Office of Mission and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence as we develop ways forward for our community - including concrete actions.

The question that animates our university mission "How ought we to live?" guides us toward action in times of crisis. As a Jesuit Catholic university, we are called to live in solidarity with all, but especially individuals and communities targeted by bigotry and violence. We must uphold the dignity of every human being, reject racism, white supremacy and white nationalism, and violence. We must share the hard work of constructing an inclusive community where all can flourish. As a special and privileged community - a Jesuit university community - we are called to use our education, intelligence, and skills to work for peace and end the epidemic of gun violence. In short, we are called to build a more just and humane world.



John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.
President