



From the Office of the President

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REGIS UNIVERSITY | DENVER, COLORADO

Anti-Asian hate and violence in America

Office of the President

March 16th, 2021

To the Regis community,

Yesterday our country was gripped by another tragedy of gun violence when a young white man shot and killed eight people, six of whom were Asian-Americans, in the Atlanta area.

While the motive for these murders remains under investigation, there are legitimate fears this massacre could lead to an escalation in hate speech, violence and discrimination against people of Asian descent.

This nation is already in the grips of a surge in anti-Asian hate, fueled largely by racists and provocateurs seeking to blame all Asians because the pandemic may have originated in a Chinese province. Hate crimes targeting Asians are up 150 percent in the past year. It is frightening for everyone but especially for those who have been targeted simply for their nationality or color of their skin.

We cannot allow this to continue.

To the Asian-American people of the Regis community who feel this persecution acutely, I ask: How can the Regis community help and serve you right now in this terrible time of heightened fear and trauma? We stand with you, as always, and you are in my daily prayers, but I want to ensure that your personal, emotional needs are being met. To this end, with whom are you processing these events of both a corporate and personal nature? Please do not suffer in silence but reach out to friends and colleagues. Please access the University's many resources for support, which I have listed below.

Hate fails when good people stand resolute. This country is bigger than its differences. This world is larger than the forces that divide. From the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. to Mahatma Gandhi to Jesus of Nazareth, we have living proof that love overcomes hate. We cannot settle for anything else.

Our Holy Father loves each of us without exception. Jesus taught us how to love our neighbor. Scripture counsels us to seek unity. "Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God," the Apostle Paul reminds us in Romans 15:7.



And so, I remind each of you and I take up this charge anew myself today: We must Rise Up, Pull Together and Be Open and Loving in our Regis community and in our lives outside of its cherished halls.

- **Rise Up:** Speak out against all forms of racism. Question and counter arguments that place blame on specific communities. Do not let hateful speech or hateful acts go unchallenged.
- **Pull Together:** Educate yourselves about the long history of Anti-Asian violence. Support one another.
- **Be Open and Loving:** Let us speak openly and often about the pain, anger and challenges we face in our lives. Do not miss an opportunity to support victims, confront ignorance and teach acceptance.

The pandemic toll – more than 537,000 now – is well reported. A lesser-known figure is that a record 41,500 Americans also died of gun violence in 2020, including 23,000 by suicide. This curse did not abate during the pandemic. People continue to turn to guns to “solve” their problems. We must speak out on the American virus of gun violence and call on our leaders to have the courage to lock down this deadly scourge.

In closing, I leave you with some campus resources. Please do use these services as needed.

- Contact the **Center for Counseling and Personal Development** at 303.458.3507
- Contact our **University Ministry** at umin@regis.edu and 303.458.4153.
- Contact the **Bias Incident Response Team (BIRT)** to report a witnessed or experienced bias incident or microaggression at Regis University using [this form](#).
- Access the **Employee Assistance Program** by calling 800-964-3577 or visiting [guidance resources.com](http://guidance.resources.com).

Prayerfully,

Rev. John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.
President