



CONFÉRENCE DES ÉVÊQUES CATHOLIQUES DU CANADA
CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

December 17, 2012

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan
President
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC
USA 20017

Your Eminence,

On behalf of the Bishops and all the faithful of our country, I extend our heartfelt prayers and deepest sympathies on the recent horrible killings of 20 young children and six adults in the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14. Please convey to the families and community of Newtown, Connecticut, and to the Diocese of Bridgeport and its parish of Saint Rose of Lima, our sentiments of sympathy and solidarity.

Canadians join with Americans and the rest of the world in lamenting this tragic moment. It is not only the local community of Newtown or your own nation which is experiencing such great loss and sorrow, but also the whole of North American society. Our culture has become mesmerized and exploited by violence in its many dehumanizing and senseless forms. Its victims are not only the dead, the wounded, their families and the citizens of Newtown. Each of us has been injured and hurt: every heart by the images of human suffering, every soul by the malice and cruelty at work in any act of violence.

Christian communities around the world are preparing to celebrate at Christmas the Gift of Life and Love. May God help our society in this tragic moment to be more respectful of the sacredness of life, and inspire all communities in their determination to serve and protect the common good.

We pray for God's gift of healing and reconciliation in Newtown and its surrounding communities. We pray also that the people of our two nations discover a rebirth of love and a renewed appreciation for the gift and value of each human life and every human family.

With the assurance of my prayers for God's blessings upon your work and witness, I am,

Yours fraternally in Our Lord,

+ Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton and
President of the Canadian Conference
of Catholic Bishops