



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
BIRMINGHAM *in* **ALABAMA**

**Bishop Steven J. Raica releases statement regarding the
shootings of September 21, 2024**

Birmingham, AL (September 24, 2024) A violent tragedy unfolded on the sidewalks of Birmingham this past Saturday. Lives were lost. Many were injured. The good will of people throughout our community was left deeply scarred.

For those who died, we join together in prayer for the repose of their souls in the loving care of God. To their families and friends, may the peace of Christ, our Lord, bring you comfort in your grief and joy in remembrance of your loved one's life. To those recovering from their injuries and survivors whose damage is held deep in their hearts, we pray for your healing with gratitude that you remain with us.

Far too often in our world, those lost in fear, hatred, anger, and revenge strike out to take the lives of others. Near to us, as this was, or far removed, we all feel the anguish of their action, but we need not lose heart. Instead, we pray for their conversion, even as we seek justice for what they have unleashed into our world. We look for certainty and hope that goodness, love, and healing, which Christ preached, will prevail over evil.

What are we to do? Our Lord reminds us, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Achieving peace doesn't happen automatically or by accident. It is an arduous task. It must be cultivated, developed, understood, embraced, and practiced daily. Relying on our faith in Christ, we take our cue to live as agents of and for peace in our communities. Finally, I pray for the strength to recognize and uphold the dignity of all life as we care for and cherish one another as Christ instructed.

+ *Steven J. Raica*

Most Reverend Steven J. Raica
Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama