

December 17, 2012

Archbishop offers condolences to families, prayers for victims of Sandy Hook Shooting

Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle released the following statement of sympathy for the victims of the shooting in the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., on Dec. 17:

"Peace be with you." These familiar words of Jesus used in our celebration of Mass express our sincerest hope and desire for our family, friends, neighbors and the world. It is the precious gift we hope will bless the hearts and minds of every person and every community. The tragic shooting of innocent children and adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, has made the prospects for peace seem distant this Advent. But as the prophet Zephaniah reminded us at Mass this past weekend, "Fear not, O Zion! Be not discouraged. The Lord, your God, is in your midst."

We join our hearts in sincerest sympathy for the families, friends and neighbors of the victims and add our prayers to those of the entire nation for the victims and all who love them.

As the people of Newtown Conn., struggle to find peace in the midst of such enormous tragedy and loss, the people of the Archdiocese of Seattle offer our prayers and extend our sympathy, in sure hope that the Lord Jesus, who is peace, will bring that most precious gift to them in these days of Advent, at Christmas and in the year ahead.

All of us are shocked and saddened by the violence that has ruptured the nation's tranquility. It is at times such as these that we must rely on God, and resolve to become instruments of his peace in our own homes, workplaces and communities.

In Christ alone is our hope for true peace, the peace that wipes away every tear and gives light to our darkest hours. May his love bring comfort to all victims suffering as a result of violence and give us the wisdom and strength to oppose and heal it.