



NEWS RELEASE

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

San Diego Bishop Addresses Latino Memorial for Orlando Victims

SAN DIEGO, July 9, 2016 – The Most Rev. Robert McElroy, head of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego, tonight delivered the following statement during the San Diego Latino/Latina/Latinx Memorial at St. Paul’s Episcopal Cathedral for victims of the shooting in Orlando.

“Our Lady of Guadalupe occupies a pivotal role in Hispanic spirituality and culture, and as we gather to mourn the Latino men and women whose precious lives were ended by cruelty, hatred and violence in Orlando, it is particularly appropriate that we point to the figure of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, the Mother of the Lord, who symbolizes on so many levels the sadness of this night.

“In the Catholic tradition, Mary, as the Mother of Jesus, experienced seven profound sorrows, beginning with having to flee her homeland with her husband and son as refugees, and culminating in the profound suffering of watching as her son Jesus was tortured, crucified and buried. Over the past four weeks, I have no doubt that our Lady of Guadalupe has wept for us all as a people, as our nation has experienced seven enormous sorrows that strike at the very heart of our peacefulness, our security, our identity, our unity.

“The sorrow of 49 women and men, filled with graces, talents and hope, targeted and killed in Orlando because of a vile prejudice against their sexual orientation.

“The sorrow of their families and friends, who awoke to a horror of deep and unimaginable loss that will haunt them for the rest of their lives.

“The sorrow of guns and violence continually pointing to our national inability to eradicate the brutal convulsions which tear at our nation’s sense of safety and its social fabric.

“The sorrow of the Muslim community, once again targeted not because of their religious beliefs, but by the distortion of those beliefs or the political gain which that distortion can bring.

“The sorrow of young black men and their families and young people of color who must live in a world where racial prejudice ends the lives of even those who follow every rule.

“The sorrow of police who are murdered because they are white or because they are blue, and the terrible toll that takes upon the families of all who dedicate their lives to enforcing justice in our nation.

“The sorrow of recognizing that these events are not random in our nation, but constitute a profound crisis of our national soul which calls us to choose between our unity and our prejudices, our hatreds and our peace.

“This terrible time of sorrow calls us to see one another as God sees us. There are no children of a lesser god and there are no lesser children of the one God who is the father of us all. Our failure to recognize this simple reality is the greatest sorrow of all.

“Let us pray this night in union with Mary, mother of sorrows and mother of the Lord:

Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe,
Ore para que nuestro país
That we might rebuild hope on foundations of rock
That we may come to see every life as precious and equal to our own
That we can eliminate the barriers of hatred and the terrible wounds they produce
That this cycle of violence might yield to a pathway of compassion and mutual accompaniment
Ayúdenos, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe
Ayúdenos a todos. Amen.

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San Diego Diocese

The Diocese of San Diego runs the length of California’s border with Mexico and serves more than 1 million Catholics in San Diego and Imperial Counties. It includes 98 parishes, 51 elementary and secondary schools and various social service and family support organizations throughout the region. The diocese also includes five historic sites, the most well known of which is the Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá, the first mission established in California by St. Junipero Serra in 1769.