



AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Memorial of the Presentation of Mary
November 21, 2022

A Pastoral Response to the shooting at Club Q

As the Christian community prepares to celebrate the liturgical season of Advent, a time to reflect on the themes of joy, hope, peace, and love, we prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Christmas; the mystery of the Incarnation; we as a nation are challenged by yet another act of gun violence and slaughter.

As we witness another incidence of hatred toward one of our LGBTQI communities and, elsewhere our Jewish brothers and sisters, we might be tempted to cry out with the prophet Habakkuk, *"How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, 'Violence!' but you do not save?"* (Hab 1.2). We might despair at the seemingly never ending toxic mix of hate coupled with guns and acknowledge that these attacks stand in stark contrast to the Advent invitation to hold on to God's promise that, *"Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace forever."* (Psalm 72.7)

The American National Catholic Church is committed to being a witness to the all-inclusive and extravagant love of God made flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. This Advent, in the midst of this tragedy, we can be courageous in our acts of inclusion and commit ourselves to be steadfast followers of the Prince of Peace.