

Statement of U.S. Bishops' Chairman for Asian and Pacific Island Affairs on Discrimination Against the Asian Community

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WASHINGTON — Following deadly shootings at three businesses in the greater Atlanta area this past week and the dialogue that has been ignited about other reported incidents of aggression against people of Asian descent, Bishop Oscar A. Solis of Salt Lake City, and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs decried the culture of death, hatred and violence that underlies these incidents and called for solidarity with the vulnerable. The full statement follows:

“I am deeply saddened to hear of another mass shooting that has tragically taken the lives of eight people and has renewed concerns about a rise of hostility against individuals of Asian descent. As bishops, we decry any kind of hatred and violence, particularly based on race, ethnicity, or sex. We pray for the families and friends of those who were lost, and for their communities, who may feel unsafe and vulnerable at this time.

“This latest incident has prompted national dialogue on addressing anti-Asian bias that has taken the form of numerous other acts of physical violence, verbal attacks and destruction of property against those of Asian descent over the last year that have left communities across the country traumatized.

“I echo Archbishop Gregory Hartmayer’s words that ‘[w]e must support all victims of violence and stand in solidarity with those who are vulnerable in our communities.’ More broadly, we must always stress that every human being is a brother or sister in Christ, created in the image and likeness of a loving God. Particularly during this season of Lent, let us remember God’s love and mercy for each one of us and renew the call for conversion of heart, that we may be more united to God’s love and share it with all of our neighbors.”

Last May, in the midst of increased reports of incidents of racism and xenophobia against Americans of Asian and Pacific Island heritage, three bishop chairmen issued a statement expressing their “call for a stronger resolve towards unity, demonstrated through acts of solidarity, kindness and love toward one another, so that we can emerge from this crisis renewed and stronger as one American people; a people that places value in every human life, regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender or religious affiliation.”

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