



Diocese of Colorado Springs

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bishop James Golka's statement on Colorado Springs nightclub shooting

COLORADO SPRINGS. Bishop James Golka issued the following statement in response to the Nov. 19 shooting at Club Q in Colorado Springs:

“My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This past Saturday evening, our community was witness to a horrific shooting at a nightclub in Colorado Springs. At least five people were killed and 25 were injured. The recent shooting and killing is especially troubling as it appeared to target a specific part of our community. The shooter appeared to target members of the LGBTQ community. Anytime specific members of the population are targeted for violence, we should all be concerned. As Christians and Catholics, we believe in the intrinsic dignity and value of all human life. We commit ourselves to protecting and defending that human life.

We extend our deepest sympathies and prayers for the victims, their families, and friends.

According to *coloradosprings.gov*, prior to this shooting, the Colorado Springs Police Department had been investigating at least 34 homicides since the beginning of 2022. This is a 100% increase in killings from the previous year — right here in our own community. It is also disturbing that Colorado ranks seventh in the nation in suicide rates, and El Paso County leads all of Colorado in this painful statistic.

For years, the U.S. Catholic Bishops have supported policies to strengthen gun-control restrictions, such as universal background checks and limiting sales of high-capacity magazines. This is not a political issue, but rather a humanitarian issue that affects innocent lives. But we need more than this. We need to offer support for vulnerable families and for those suffering from mental health issues. I believe we also need to continue shedding light on the cultural roots of this increased violence, such as a lack of civility and increased polarization in our country.

As our world slowly crawls out of the COVID pandemic and many are facing possible financial hardship, I am deeply aware of the anxiety and pressure that is mounting for many of us. During

this time, we must work to ensure that hurting people have help. We must work to ensure that life-giving options become more viable than violence and killing.

If you or someone you know needs support, please talk to someone. Please call your priest or minister from your church. You are also invited to contact Catholic Charities of Central Colorado at 719-866-6535. Families and individuals come to Catholic Charities to begin their journey from crisis to stability, to weather the current storm, or to heal a broken spirit. Catholic Charities serves anyone in need regardless of religion, race, gender, age, disability, socioeconomic level, or background.

Let us pray that all our beloved deceased will know the fullness of life in heaven. Let us pray and work so that through our actions and attitudes, God may bring peace and healing to our world and to our local community. Let us take encouragement in the words of our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ: 'I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world' (John 16:33)."

Most Rev. James R. Golka
Bishop, Diocese of Colorado Springs

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