Blog



Katie Denzin, who attended Saugus High School in California, holds a sign with current and former Michigan State University students during a Feb. 15 rally at the capitol in Lansing, Michigan. A gunman killed three students and critically injured five others Feb. 13 on Michigan State University's campus. In November 2019, a 16-year-old killed two classmates and injured three others at Saugus High School. (AP Photo/Paul Sancya)



by Dan Stockman

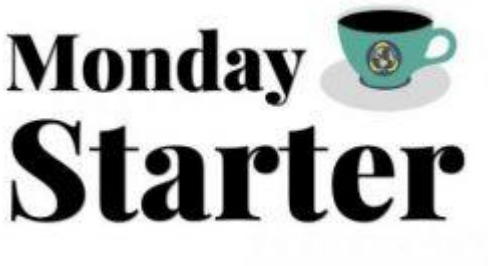
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Editor's note: *Global Sisters Report's Monday Starter is a feature from GSR staff writers that rounds up news from or about women religious that you may otherwise have missed.*



All mass shootings bring shock and horror, and none are objectively worse than others just because they hit closer to home. But shootings nearby or that directly affect those you know and love are harder to turn away from and more difficult to simply add to the ever-growing column of preventable crimes U.S. society refuses to prevent.

That was the case Feb. 13 for the Adrian Dominicans in Michigan, whose sisters have relative and friends who attend Michigan State University, where a gunman killed three students and critically injured five others. Michigan State's campus is about 75 miles from the Adrian motherhouse; Oxford, Michigan, where a gunman killed four students and wounded seven others in November 2021, is less than 100 miles from Adrian.

Some MSU students are survivors of the Oxford mass shooting, and one previously survived the Sandy Hook massacre.

The sisters issued a statement Feb. 15 decrying the violence and calling for change:

> The anguish of another devastating act of gun violence in our nation is even more acute when it happens in one's own home state at a university attended by members of our families and other loved ones, and on the

> heels of the horrific Oxford High School shooting in Michigan just over a year ago.
>
> We hold the three young people whose lives were so savagely cut short and their grieving families in our hearts and prayer, and pray for the recovery of the five critically injured students. We pray too for the healing of all members of the Michigan State University community who are dealing with the shock and traumatic effects of the assault, and especially for MSU students tragically living through a second experience of mass shootings in their young lives. ...
>
> No other nation in the world experiences these kinds of mass shootings, made possible by the ease of access to so many weapons. We call on our Michigan State Legislators and on the U.S. Congress to take immediate urgent steps to enact comprehensive gun control laws.

Many of my high school friends have children at MSU and spent the evening terrified and helpless hile their children huddled in fear and a gunman rampaged across campus. Many friends went to MSU themselves and expressed their shock and horror; my own sister is an MSU alum. The campus is about two hours away from where I live.

Predictably, my Facebook newsfeed filled with the MSU Spartan logo with tears or a broken heart, sentiments of #SpartanStrong, and messages of support and solidarity from other college campuses around the state. People reacted by clicking the "care" or "sad" emojis and offering — genuinely — their thoughts and their prayers.

But I'm done with "care" and "sad" and thoughts and prayers. I began using the "angry" emoji.

It is no longer enough to care or to be sad, far past the time to offer kind thoughts. And though it is always time to pray, if all we do is continue to pray and not work to enact real change, then we don't deserve to have our prayers answered. We — all of us — have to do something, and we have to do it now.

We need to be angry. We need to channel our grief into outrage that our leaders refuse to make even the easiest policy changes that would help end this bloodshed. That "care" emoji has to turn into truly caring that our elected officials wring their hands, make a few sound bites, and then do nothing. We need to demand that

officials who refuse to compromise in any way on any policy need to go.

When our children hide in fear under desks or dirty laundry, expecting that the next sound they hear will be the gunman, it is not too much to ask that our elected officials experience the fear of not being reelected.

And when reelection is more important than our children's lives, something is truly, hideously wrong.



Earthquake survivors gather on the rubble of a destroyed building in Aleppo, Syria, on Feb. 7. (OSV News/Reuters/Firas Makdesi)

Bringing water to post-earthquake Syria

Water With Blessings is partnering with the Sisters of Jesus and Mary in Aleppo, Syria, to get clean water to earthquake victims.

A massive earthquake struck Turkey and northern Syria, including Aleppo, on Feb. 6 and killed tens of thousands, left hundreds of thousands more homeless, and

destroyed infrastructure such as water supplies. Water With Blessings is distributing filters to make contaminated water safe to drink.

Monetary donations can be sent to Water With Blessings, 1902 Campus Place, Ste. 11, Louisville KY 40299, or contact patricia@waterwithblessings.org for bank transfer information. Your donation can be designated specifically for the work in Aleppo.

Advertisement

Videos explore spiritual connection to the Earth

The videoconference series "The Company of Charity in the Community of Earth," sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth and Sisters of Charity of New York, was recorded and is now available. The sessions, which explore our spiritual links to the Earth, are in English and can be viewed with simultaneous translation into Spanish:

Session I: To Make the Symbol Sing Again
Looking at the central teachings of our faith — Trinity, Incarnation, Sacramental Imagination — through the lens of the new cosmology and our Charity charism can make them "sing again" with new beauty.
Watch in English | Watch in Spanish

Session II: Coming Home to Our Bodies, Coming Home to the Land
Learning to honor our bodies and live in conscious relationship to the Land can open new paths of relationship with the Divine.
Watch in English | Watch in Spanish

Session III: Gifts from the Heart of Vincent: The Vincentian Virtues for an Ecozoic Age
Looking at the five traditional Vincentian virtues through an ecological lens can release new energy for living the charism of Charity.
Watch in English | Watch in Spanish



Rescue workers clear the rubble of a residential building Feb. 15 that a Russian rocket destroyed in Pokrovsk, Ukraine. (AP Photo/Evgeniy Maloletka)

A year of war in Ukraine

Catholic sisters have been helping refugees in Ukraine and neighboring countries since Russia invaded Ukraine Feb. 24, 2022, and you can hear about their extraordinary efforts at our next Witness & Grace conversation.

The online event, "Ukraine: A Year at War," features Sr. Lucia Murashko and Sr. Emanujila Oksana Vishka, both members of the Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great, and Global Sisters Report's international correspondent, Chris Herlinger, who recently returned from a reporting trip to Ukraine and Poland.

Herlinger will discuss the destruction and hope he witnessed while the sisters will share how they keep their spirituality strong amid such devastation and danger. The session will include how to help refugees.

The event is 3 p.m. Eastern time on Thursday, March 2. Registration is free.

Read this next: What have Ukrainians learned from months of war?