



**MERCY EDUCATORS STATEMENT ON GUN VIOLENCE
February, 2013**

The unspeakable use of a military assault weapon to massacre elementary school children compels us as leaders in Mercy education to speak, to say "enough." In light of the tragedy of Newtown, Connecticut, we believe that as educators, persons of faith and religious leaders we must speak and act at this critical time.

This recent shooting reveals a sobering and recurring pattern of crimes in this nation that occur all too frequently, have become more lethal than ever and strike at the heart of what we stand for as mercy educators. We are educators who stand in the long and proven tradition of the Sisters of Mercy who have served children and young adults of diverse ages, races, religions, cultures and socio-economic standing across this nation for over 170 years. Our enduring concerns have been and continue to be the sacredness of life that must be respected and our children must be protected. With the Sisters of Mercy and as leaders at all levels of Mercy education, we are also committed to the practice of non-violence as an integral aspect of our duty to pass on the charism of mercy upon which our schools were founded.

Therefore, we join all our voices and add them to a much needed national dialogue. On behalf of the future, for the sake of our children and young adults,

- we reject the overly simplistic belief that increasing armed security personnel in schools will increase student safety
- we call for sensible gun control measures;
- we support robust funding of mental health services;
- we commit to efforts that build a culture of non-violence.

The Sisters of Mercy and those who minister in the name of Mercy are committed to working toward a culture of nonviolence whether in response to acts of mass violence, to the daily violence our children face on city streets, to the violence of poverty and inequality or to the lack of opportunity. As we stand in solidarity and prayer with victims of violence, we call on our elected officials, parents and religious leaders to take courageous action that addresses violence.

SIGNERS:

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