



September 2, 2025

Dear Friends,

I write to you today in the wake of yet another tragic school shooting, this time targeting children during the celebration of the Eucharist, our most cherished tradition, at Annunciation Church and School in Minneapolis. Words feel inadequate in moments like this. Children, teachers, and families who should have known only safety and peace were met with violence and fear. Some blame mental illness for this tragedy while others point to the ongoing proliferation of guns, the latter being something Pope Leo XIV referred to as a "pandemic of arms." These two critical issues are not mutually exclusive, and it is a waste of time and energy to pit them against each other. Both cry out for our attention.

Our first response must be compassion—for the victims, their loved ones, and the wider community now bearing unimaginable grief. As a university rooted in the Jesuit tradition, we are called to stand in solidarity with those who suffer. St. Ignatius taught us to "find God in all things," even in darkness, even when God's presence feels hidden. In moments like this, that invitation is especially difficult, yet especially urgent. We are asked to recognize God's nearness in our tears, in our anger, in our longing for peace.

Our Jesuit way of proceeding also asks us not to turn away, but to accompany—to walk with the grieving, to comfort the afflicted, and to let our hearts be moved to action for justice and peace. If we truly believe in the dignity of every person as a child of God, then violence against even one diminishes us all.

Let us recommit ourselves to being builders of peace: on our campus, in our neighborhoods, and throughout our nation. May our lives testify to the God of life, not death; of love, not fear. In this way, we will honor the memory of those lost at Annunciation and support the healing of those who remain.

I invite all of you to **a special prayer service scheduled for Friday at 3:30pm** in the Rose Garden (or the Sacred Heart Chapel if raining). May our prayer strengthen us to be instruments of Christ's peace in a world so deeply in need of it.

Yours faithfully,

Fr. Marina