From: Doug Mandelaro <Doug.Mandelaro@dor.org>

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Subject: Statements on El Paso, Dayton violence

Bishop Salvatore R. Matano joins with his brother bishops of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in the statements below, issued this past weekend in the aftermath of the horrific violence in El Paso and Dayton. Bishop Matano asks all the faithful of the Diocese of Rochester to pray for the victims of these senseless acts and for all those who suffer because of violence and hatred.

**USCCB STATEMENT ON THE DAYTON, OHIO TRAGEDY**

“We extend our condolences to the families and friends of those murdered in Dayton last night. The lives lost this weekend confront us with a terrible truth. We can never again believe that mass shootings are an isolated exception. They are an epidemic against life that we must, in justice, face. God’s mercy and wisdom compel us to move toward preventative action. We encourage all Catholics to increased prayer and sacrifice for healing and the end of these shootings. We encourage Catholics to pray and raise their voices for needed changes to our national policy and national culture as well. We call on all relevant committees of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to outline a reinvigorated policy agenda and pastoral campaign to address ways we can help fight this social disease that has infected our nation. The Conference has long advocated for responsible gun laws and increased resources for addressing the root causes of violence. We also call upon the President and Congress to set aside political interests and find ways to better protect innocent life.”

**USCCB STATEMENT ON THE EL PASO, TEXAS TRAGEDY**

 “This Saturday, less than week after the horrific instances of gun violence in California, yet another terrible, senseless and inhumane shooting took place, this time at a shopping mall in El Paso, Texas. Something remains fundamentally evil in our society when locations where people congregate to engage in the everyday activities of life can, without warning, become scenes of violence and contempt for human life. The plague that gun violence has become continues unchecked and spreads across our country. Things must change. Once again, we call for effective legislation that addresses why these unimaginable and repeated occurrences of murderous gun violence continue to take place in our communities. As people of faith, we continue to pray for all the victims, and for healing in all these stricken communities. But action is also needed to end these abhorrent acts.”