

# Hail Mary: Advocate, Guide and Model of Justice

## A Reflection For An End to Gun Violence

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### Hail Mary,

Hail, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends of victims of gun violence. We greet you. We hold you in prayer.

Let us never more have to address you or have to announce to you that your loved one has been wounded or killed needlessly.

Rather let this be the time, the new beginning, of greeting one another, announcing that the end of gun violence has at last come.

### full of grace

Mary, our God filled you with God-life. Intercede for us please.

We need a world filled with this God-Life, with the flow of peace, the grace of understanding one another that we might teach the young that violence is not the answer to disagreement or differences whether of religion, or politics, or decisions.

Our world so needs to be “full” of love.

### the Lord is with you.

Mary, our God is ever present. What does this world need to become more and more aware of your presence in one another? How can we become living witnesses that God is in everyone, no matter what race or creed or color of skin?

Yes, our Lord is with you. We must encourage respect for all persons.

And we must comfort those who are wounded physically, psychologically and/or emotionally. Remind them that our God is with them so that they may have courage, strength and hope.

## Blessed are you among women

Mary, our God singled you out among the women of all time. You were called to bring Christ-life to us. You answered yes, giving of yourself, offering to BE and to bring Christ to a world so often in turmoil and in need of salvation.

Teach us to be Christ-bearers in this world so torn by gun violence and killing and wounding and hurting.

Teach us, women and men, to be daring enough to speak out against these issues, which only destroy and tear apart the Body of Christ today.

Teach us to answer “yes” to the calls to support and advocate for the right to live in a world of peace and non-violence.



## and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Ah, Mary, Life grew in your blessed womb. The womb is a safe place, a sacred place where life flows from one to another. Life gushes out at birth. Your Son, our God, burst forth at His birth.

How can we mirror this Mystery today, in the every-day? Can we bring this life-burst in our relationships with others, in our witnessing, in our efforts to create a better, safer environment, one with security? Can we lessen the fear to even send our children to school?

Yes, Jesus, your Son, taught us the way. May we learn to live His way, His life, His truth.

## Holy Mary,

Mary, to be holy, to be whole, to be filled with Love: we also are called to be holy. "To be perfect as our heavenly God is perfect." What does that mean? Just what does that look like? It's the call to be "all that we can be," isn't it? You gave yourself totally to your mission. Can you intercede for us and show us the way of your Son?

We are called to "have life and have it to the full." Isn't that everyone's right? Why is it that so many are deprived of that right? What can we do? We must open our hearts and open the doors to those who are in need. We must find ways to bring them also to a life that is whole and holy, a life that is filled with hope, not despair, with opportunity, not disparagement, a life that is free from violence and degradation that they too may have life that is full.

## Mother of God,

Mary, you were a mother. You nurtured your child. You watched him grow to manhood, watched Him in His ministry though it was not always appreciated, and often countercultural, among the people in your day. And finally, you watched Him be tortured and killed. You held His dead body in your arms.

So many mothers today are holding the wounded and dead bodies of their young children whose lives have been taken away too soon. Innocent children are victims of anger, sick minds, violence, persons who do not know how to redirect their own misguided ideologies of anger and bitterness, poverty and resentment...

Be a source of comfort for mothers, Mary. Nurture their broken hearts with the solace only love can bring.

## pray for us sinners

Mary, pray for us, for our failures to "act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God."

Sometimes we fail to see what is lacking in the lives of others. We fail to make ourselves aware of the distress and injustices others endure. Sometimes we ourselves exhibit behaviors that are uncaring, lacking the tender love so needed in our world. Sometimes we do not "walk the talk" of the message the Gospel challenges us to live, one with our God.

## now

“If not now, when?” Isn’t that a good question, Mary? When will we listen to the cry of persons so broken by violence? When will we speak out against such evils as gun violence in our streets?

We can make a difference. We can foster life. We can write letters, make calls, make our voices heard, especially for those who have no voice. We can enable others to make their rights known. We can counter those who only perpetrate fear, those who make laws that seemingly favor those in power for their own selfish wants to the detriment of others, or those who don’t pass laws which would benefit the safety of all.

We can. And we must do it NOW.

Mary, be our advocate and model of justice.

## and at the hour of our death.

Mary, be our strength as we die to self.

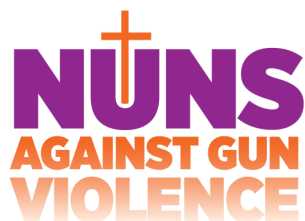
We die to self when we let go of our own fears and hesitations to action. We die to self when we open our eyes to the distress and pain of those around us and give our help. We die to self when we give of our precious time to truly be present and attentive to those who are victims of injustice, violence, and threats against their well-being.

Mary, ask your Son, victim of violence, to teach us how to die to self so that others may live.

## Amen.

Mary, we look to you as our guide. Lead us to become women and men of justice and nonviolence. Let us be leaders and Christ-bearers to our world so in need of the tenderness of God’s love.

So be it.



[www.nunsagainstgunviolence.org](http://www.nunsagainstgunviolence.org)

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