

While i have served the families of Noah Pozner, Jesse Lewis, Benjamin Wheeler and Dylan Hockley, in my capacity as a grief counselor, i have no intention of speaking on their behalf, Nor do i have the authority to speak for them. I speak solely from my heart as an advocate for peace, love and compassion:

pilgrimage to peace

My pilgrimage to this moment can be chronicled 3 parts..a time of past and before the shooting, the incident and what defines our mutual present, and the time after...

yes I too was brought down to my knees, broken-hearted...and like all of you i surrendered to the pull by the magnet of love of 20 slaughtered children...i arrived at Sandy Hook command center early Saturday morning on december 15 as certified disaster relief counselor and physician..and was immediately put to work with families and first responders, by a perceptive commander who agreed with me that i was not going to waste time in endless meetings, while the families's deep wounds were in urgent need of attention.

We have been brought to an awakened star of deep listening, attention and sacred action

Yet: this tragedy is but a chain link in a vicious cycle...

i pray the ancient prayer of the Ojibwe...O great Spirit. ..o Grandfather

'give us the hearts to understand...we come before you in a mumble manner and offer you this sacred moment..with tears in our eyes and an ancient song in our hearts...

we sing and pray HONOR all LIFE and help support that HONOR

One of our Fathers MLK; says "by our readiness to allow arms to be purchased at will and fired at whim we have created an atmosphere in which violence and hatred have become popular pastimes."

The Old testament and the Koran show us that when the blood of the innocent has been shed, the ground that soaks up the fallen tears becomes sacred ground.

Lord , Jesus Christ...teach us to take off our shoes, and walk barefoot in humility and respect into this holy space...as i walk solemnly into this space, i also stand as witness to 2 beings..one of them, almost always, and eerily a mail boy child holds a gun..this gun forms the base of a strange and formidable barrier between them of infinite and exponential separation, this macabre inanimate object devoid of judgment, discernment and reason...it irreversibly not only time..but space..heart space...wisdom space...it creates holes and voids imploding into them with a deafening noise then renders all speechless, mute, blind and paralyzed....in the muse of Mahatma gandhi this weapon leaves the tangible permanence of evil...must this weapon kill? i hereby propose that we invest in the research to create a weapon of defense that can be fast, efficient in its purpose of safety and defense...but must not kill..let this be a weapon that symbolizes the highest of our competence and humanity ...that expands our collective conscience , forges in its path not destruction but path to redemption, reconciliation and forgives...scientist Isaac Asimov challenges us that we can no longer be comfortable in this age of technology, with a state of ' violence that is the refuge of the incompetent".

I turn to look at what will most likely be a male, holding the gun...what has turned on your deadly thoughts of attack, vengeance, and hate? what has gone unmitigated in you that now stands threatened, fearful, impotent and full of rage? what caused this? I beseech us all pediatricians, family physicians, clergy, politicians, teachers, parents, pharmaceutical companies, farmers, Hollywood, video games, media representatives to take a deep and honest inventory of what seems to be activating this deadly perception of self attack, and killing gene?

I call on the spirit of Henry Nouwen Catholic priest and philosopher to meditate on this great truth that "much violence is based on the illusion that life is property to be defended and not to be shared" ..

Before you pull the trigger my son..Bishop Tutu and I ask? do you see that my humanity is bound up in yours?

How had your conscience died? before our tears fall...Son had your soul cried?

Yes as you pull the trigger I too look up to the sky as Jesus did ..we lament for yours and our collective forgiveness..and insist on the resurrection of unity and reconciliation ..for as Kahlil Gibran warns.." I say that even as the holy and the righteous cannot rise beyond the highest which is in each one of you, so the wicked and the weak cannot fall lower than the lowest which is in you also. and as a single leaf turns not yellow but with the silent knowledge of the whole tree, so the wrong-doer cannot do wrong without the hidden will of you all.'

JFK Kennedy appeals us all to evolve to a time of no war..no violence and as I look to the survivors and the victims the after pilgrimage...the long and treacherous walk to peace...I will share with you into quiet and humble obscurity my journey at Newtown and Sandy Hook..the first I must go silent to allow you to focus on the message and not the messenger...I placed two butterflies on the chests of two parents as a symbol of the given homily of the butterfly, the symbol of our collective, yet fragile transformation into wings of love, washed the feet of a mother paralyzed by grief with the tears of Mother Mary so that we can all stand up and walk again as soldiers of peace, gave the statue Kwan Yin Mother of mercy and compassion to another mother, wept with her to take these tears as cleanse us all into hearts of hope and mercy, gave to some other parents the light of understanding when upon seeing their fallen son's passion for lighthouses and the symbol for our own coming out of the darkness of our own tragic ignorance, held the hands of stoic officers who for this first time felt impotent and useless as they witnessed the blood and brokenness of the purity and innocence, emboldened back into the Davidean lions den because bearing witness is the most courageous act that must be silent and obscure for it to carry the power of a goodness that is sustainable and victorious..attend Dawn's funeral and hugged her daughters and family, thank her for bringing us into our own dawn and realities of the truth of a culture at a crossroads, spoke to the director and superintendent, hugged, wept and thanked them for standing in harm's way for our children, living and dying for the now battleground mission of dispelling ignorance and marching stalwartly towards the freedom of knowledge and wisdom..I ask all to join me in a collective effort to review school curriculums to include peace studies, emotional wellness classes, that would integrate the evidence based learning of positive thinking, mindfulness, gratitude and kindness as natural antidotes to anger and fear; and compassionate living and forgiveness work starting from

kindergarden....brought them to the inauguration to join the larger village and community of support and resource; asking the president, congress, the NRA, and the pentagon to open a department of peace and compassion, i would be the first in line to sign up to work...as a volunteer janitor to sweep its floors; i walked as a pilgrim at the million women march...have asked Sandy hook promise to have 12/14 become a national day for peace and meditation, and Feb 14 be a annual Newtown/Sandy hook love rally/summit.

And now speak soulfully as interfaith minister, and physician the Jewish prayer: " let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable to you, Adonai!":

Noah...dragon spirit who cannot be silence no matter how evil tried..arch of hope opening our gate on our sojourn to peace..

Benjamin Wheeler lover of lighthouses and lighting; strike mercy into our hearts, and guide us from callousness to conscience,

Dylan Hockley, our buddha of love, flutter your fragile butterfly wings, create of us tsunamis of love...the most powerful weapon of all...show us the way to break out of our cocoons of ego into wings of empathy.

All the children who were wrapped in life and death in shrouds of purple the color of unity and reconciliation, it is also the color of royalty...i bow down to you o angels of love, light, hope

Jesse Lewis soldier of Peace you wrote to us one week before you died..and transcribed these three words into our minds, hearts and souls:

nurturing

helping

love

2 days before you died you drew us this picture..now our manifesto for peace

of an angel facing the man of evil...you go on ahead and lead us to victory Jesse...you go on ahead a pave the way from hatred to hope

from hubris to humility...

All you Angels have turned this ground of desolation into a place of sanctuary and sanctity...each person now stands bowed head to head to form a pinnacle...held at the base firmly, indomitably by the weapon of love and compassion...and in the spirit of MLK allow this weapon become and "active pouring of ourselves into the being of another"...together we form a holy trinity, our triad of human possibility, our pyramid of love, peace and unity.

I end with my daily prayer:

i am here only to be truly helpful

i am here to represent Him Who sent me.

i do not have to worry
about what to say or what to do,
because He Who sent me will direct me.
i am content to be wherever He wishes
knowing He goes there with me
i will be healed as i Let Him teach me to heal.
and so it is Ashe and Amen