



# “Just Us”

News & Notes from Sisters of St. Joseph  
Justice & Peace Office  
150 French Road, Rochester, NY 14618

No. June 6, 2022

[ptierney@ssjrochester.org](mailto:ptierney@ssjrochester.org)

(585) 641-8180

## Gun Violence Takes Center Stage – Action is Needed!

We have witnessed more gun violence in the past two weeks than we ever wanted to know or hear about! As we continue to mourn the victims of Buffalo and Uvalde, the NYS Legislature took some action in its last days of session.

### NYS Gun Control measures:

“Microstamping” on new guns would allow bullets to be linked to the weapons that fired them.

Most people would be disallowed the purchase of body armor.

The legal age to buy or own a semi-automatic rifle would be raised from 18 to 21.

Checks would make it possible for more people to file extreme risk protection orders that would prevent certain people from purchasing firearms (which would strengthen the ‘red flag law’).

**Governor Hochul signed all of these measures into law, making it the first state in the nation to do so.**

**Everytown for Gun Safety** lists NYS as having the third most powerful laws against gun violence in the country but we still average about 840 deaths a year. In the city of Rochester alone we have had 29 homicides since January!

See website for information by state and opportunities for action!

<https://www.everytown.org/>

## NYS Legislative Session Ends—Here is What Passed!

The Assembly passed the [New York Voting Rights Act](#) Thursday afternoon, after the omnibus voter-protection bill passed the State Senate the day before. The bill is modeled on the federal Voting Rights Act, passed in 1965 to protect the rights of Black voters and largely defanged over the last decade by the U.S. Supreme Court.

**The NYS Senate was able to pass a two year moratorium on cryptocurrency mining using fossil fuels to power former coal-fueled plants through proof-of work.** This legislation would put a moratorium on new permits for an industry called proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining. This process uses enormous amounts of electricity generated by burning fossil fuels and also discharges heated water into streams. It is contributing to climate change and environmental destruction.

**Our SSJ Justice & Care for Creation Committee supported both of these bills this legislative session and are happy they passed!**

### **PLEASE TAKE ACTION AND CALL GOVERNOR**

**HOCHUL:** ask her to sign the bill, which is Assembly bill 7389C/Senate bill 6486D.

Please call her at **518-474-8390** and keep speaking out for God’s creation.

You may have to leave a message or go into her website to send a message. Albany news from WXXI says she may not sign it!

## Prayer for Juneteenth

*On June 19, 1865, enslaved African-Americans in Galveston, Texas, were told they were free, almost two years after the Emancipation Proclamation. This date has become symbolic of the end of 400 years of slavery, and people across the U.S. have celebrated this day for a century and a half, but it was established as a federal holiday in 2021.*

Creator God, we acknowledge The 400 years of slavery and pain Your children stolen from Africa endured.

We acknowledge the sin of racism That continues to sully our nation, That continues to stir violence. Hear our prayers for healing.

Creator God, we celebrate The strength of our communities, Who keep the faith, Who keep the hope alive That healing is always possible, That we can become the nation We aspire to be, with respect for all, Where every person can live Secure in dignity and with peace.

Creator God, we give thanks For the end of the enslavement Of your beloved children. Hear our prayers for the end of racism: Prayers that move us to prophetic action, So all the promises of freedom Will be fully realized in our nation.

Amen

Jane Deren, Ph.D.

1 / 1 Copyright © 2022, Education for Justice, a project of the Ignatian Solidarity Network.

SSJ Website [www.ssjrochester.org/](http://www.ssjrochester.org/)

Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/SistersofSaintJosephofRochester](https://www.facebook.com/SistersofSaintJosephofRochester)  
(CTRL & Clic)Brazil link: Copy & Paste:  
<http://www.isjrochester.com.br>

Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/SistersofSaintJosephofRochester](https://www.facebook.com/SistersofSaintJosephofRochester)  
(CTRL & Click)

Brazil link: Copy & Paste:  
<http://www.isjrochester.com.br>



### **▲ Letter to the Interfaith Community from our Jewish Friends**

In the Jewish tradition, when we lose a loved one, we “sit shiva”—this custom asks us to sit on hard chairs while we greet family and friends to help us grieve and mourn the dead. “Sitting shiva” usually lasts for one week, allowing us to fully experience all the emotions of loss with the support of our community.

But there is no Jewish custom prescribed for the kind of loss we are collectively feeling, reeling from: the mass shootings both close to home and afar, in recent weeks and even months and years past. Even as recently as yesterday.

**WHAT:** 200+ chairs will be placed on [Washington Square Park](#), in which we will sit silently, together, in collective mourning, for one hour. We are asking for community members to volunteer to sit. This event is co-hosted by the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation and Anthony Hall, Executive Director of [BOOKBAGS Express](#).

**WHO:** Anyone who wishes to sit silently; some may choose to hold a sign bearing the name(s) of those who’ve lost their lives to gun violence. There will be 212 chairs, signifying the number of mass shootings that have occurred in the United States in 2022. We welcome all people, all faiths, all communities to sit with us.

**We invite you and your community to sit—and to stand—with us on Sunday, June 12th, from 12:00-1:00 p.m. in solidarity with all of the families who grieve the loss of their loved ones to gun violence.**

**\*Those who attend will be invited to sit or stand with a sign—a memorial- bearing the name & age of a victim of gun violence.\*** Note: photographs of each mourner sitting with us may be used in anti-gun violence, online materials.) There will not be speakers. This is a quiet, solemn event. The signs should say it all. We also hope to have information to distribute indicating what each of us can do to influence local and federal legislators who have the power to make significant changes to current gun laws.

**Please share this event with your congregants and neighbors. It is time to come together as a community. To sign up for a seat, [please click here](#).**