



## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA  
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17 September 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The murder of Charlie Kirk is the latest in a litany of appalling acts that are stealing the soul of our Nation. In these challenging times, when we witness so many struggles in our world – political violence, threats of war, a disregard for the sanctity of human life, and a growing culture of incivility – it can be very easy to feel overwhelmed. As your Bishop, I feel a deep responsibility to share with you my thoughts and pastoral care, grounded in the hope of the Gospel.

The sacred dignity of every human person, made in the image and likeness of God, lies at the heart of our Catholic faith. Violence in any form—whether motivated by ideology, political anger, or international conflict—denies this dignity. To embrace hatred or vengeance is to abandon the way of Christ, who calls us to be peacemakers: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God” (Mt 5:9).

War, too, brings devastation to countless innocent lives. As disciples of Jesus, we must reject the indifference that tolerates such destruction and instead stand in solidarity with those who suffer. We must advocate and pray for peace in our communities and in our world, becoming instruments of reconciliation in every circumstance.

In our own nation, the breakdown of civility has corroded public life. Political disagreements are natural in a free society, but contempt, insults, and hostility cannot be part of the Christian witness. The world needs to see from us a different way: respectful dialogue, patience, and charity grounded in truth.

I urge all Catholics in the Diocese of Allentown to recommit themselves to the Gospel of Life and Peace. Let us renew our dedication to defending human life at every stage, from conception to natural death. Let us also be steadfast in practicing charity in our conversations, courage in our convictions, and humility in our service.

In a particular way, to our young people, your voices and actions have the power to shape the world. I encourage you to take a stand for peace, justice, and

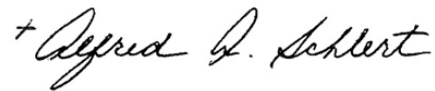
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respect in the face of division. Your energy, compassion, and faith are vital in building a culture of life and love.

At this time of great challenge and in this Jubilee Year of Hope, I invite every parish, family, and individual to pray earnestly for peace in our nation and our world, for the healing of division, and for the conversion of hearts. May Mary, Queen of Peace, intercede for us, and may her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in the path of nonviolence and love.

With prayerful gratitude for your faithful witness, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Alfred A. Schlert", preceded by a small cross symbol.

✠ Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert  
Bishop of Allentown