



### **The story of a friend for life**

Olijawon (Owen) Griffin was killed in a Metro station in Washington DC. Our friend Charlie and others were there with him immediately after the attack happened. They could not save him but they were there. Owen passed away that day but his story is given to us as an invitation to act, to respond, and to take responsibility for what is happening around us.

Owen was killed with a knife. Many more are killed with guns, pistols, rifles, and automatic weapons. Violent deaths are provoked by the reckless use of weapons that affect too many. We need better policies and legislation: guns cannot be easily available to all. Above all, we need to build a society where the use of weapons against other human beings is not a normal or inevitable event. We need to be close to one another to stop the violence before the explosion.

We commit to solidarity for life.

Following pope Francis words at the Congress we repeat:

*“Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society? Sadly, the answer, as we all know, is simply for money: money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.”*

The number of deaths and the spreading of violence in our country urges us to act both personally and collectively: one person at the time, one gesture at the time. But we also want to mobilize and ramp up a national campaign “Solidarity for Life - No to Violent Deaths - Stop the Easy Access and Improper Use of Guns” is our way to answer to the duty to which Pope Francis calls us to “confront the problem and stop the arms trade.”

### **Our appeal**

Nobody should provoke violent deaths intentionally or unintentionally.

All should do everything that they can to save lives.

We should not seek, keep or use weapons improperly.

We should all think and act for the good of all.

### **Our pledge**

I recognize that in the US too many are the victims of violence, guns and mass shootings.

I find these deaths unjust and unacceptable: they are expression of a societal disorder not just the occasional choice of an unstable person.

I join others in calling everyone living in the US to be more aware of the serious risks posed to others by people using weapons improperly: it is imperative to act to defend all, specially innocent victims.

IN signing the appeal I pledge, to speak with others and to act to move the US society toward a more secure, respectful and free future. I am aware that it will take time and the commitment of many.

This is my dream for all. This is my word and my work.

### **Solidarity for Life - No to Violent Deaths**

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