

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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GUN CONTROL OR MORAL CONTROL?

What a horrible tragedy occurred in Parkland, Florida on Valentine's Day. A deranged young man by the name of Nikolas Cruz entered the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School there and gunned down seventeen people-fourteen of them students. Unfortunately, as we are all aware such violent incidents are becoming more and more common. According to one statistic this year, there have been 18 such attacks so far. All of us remember the shootings at Columbine, Sandy Hook School and other places.

Many people, and a good number of the young in recent days have take to the streets to protest our nation's policy towards guns. Of course, speaking for myself, I don't think people should own automatic weapons. There needs to be stricter policies in that regard. Yet the right to bear arms is indeed enshrined in the Second Amendment of the Constitution, although there have been varying interpretations of what this exactly means now in 2018.

I suppose some people might own a gun in order to protect themselves and their homes. It is true to say that it's not the gun itself that is the real problem but the human person that is wielding it! In recent days, we have seen trucks and cars that have been used by terrorists to kill people in our own city and in Europe. Should we ban all vehicles in our country? Probably not!

The problem is that our culture is one that is become increasingly desensitized to life. We have the horrendous reality of legalized abortion in our country-millions and millions of pre-born babies sacrificed since that infamous Supreme Court decision of 1973. It was Mother Teresa who made this statement: "The greatest destroyer of peace is abortion." If we don't respect life in the womb, how can we really respect life outside of it?

Secondly, as regards to our young people, a great number of them are very much influenced by social media. It's sort of like a drug and has a mesmerizing effect and not for the good. Then there are the graphic displays of violence in video games. Death is celebrated in these videos because you literally get rewarded with extra points for finishing people off. Besides video games, current music lyrics, TV shows and the movies often celebrate illicit sex, violence and profanity.

So it is true to say that America really has a moral crisis today above all. The shootings in our schools, are really just a reflection of that. Recently I read that many of our college students suffer from depression and anxiety in ever increasing numbers. Could one reason be the loss of spiritual values in our land and the total absorption with hedonistic and material things?

There was a story told about a boy who was given a puzzle to do. It was quite an elaborated puzzle of the world. His parents figured that it would take him days, if not weeks to put it all together. But to their amazement, the boy had done the puzzle in one afternoon. "How did you get it done so fast?" asked his father. "Well, " the boy said, "on the other side of the puzzle there was a picture of a man...when I put the man together, the whole world came out all right!"

Yes, the world will come out all right when man and women are "whole" morally speaking-at peace with themselves, at peace with each other-at peace with almighty God!

Sincerely in Christ,
Father Jerome