Dear students, faculty and staff,

Earlier this afternoon, Mission and Ministry held a gathering for our community to pray for the victims of the shootings that took place in El Paso and Dayton over the weekend. While I know many of you were unable to attend this afternoon, I encourage you to join us as we continue to keep those impacted in our thoughts and prayers.

Many of our staff, faculty, students and alumni come from El Paso, so this hits close to home. We want everyone to know that we are thinking about them and praying for them as they unite with their families to overcome this tragedy.

In the coming days, as we prepare to begin the new academic year and welcome our newest family members to campus, please keep your colleagues and students in mind as they may need an ear to listen or a shoulder to lean on. Also, please remember that our Mission and Ministry and Counseling Services staff are available for anyone who may need support during this difficult time.

Please know that, like many of you, I am angry and tired of the racism that we know was at the root of the shooting in El Paso, and saddened by the senseless violence that has become increasingly prevalent. I am also
grateful to be called as an educator for I know that through faith and education we can transform the world.

I will close with a part of the prayer that was beautifully recited by members of our OLLU family this afternoon:

“Provident God, I come before you, once again, after another shooting. I am sad, God. So I ask you to receive into your loving care the souls of those who were killed, to care for those who were wounded or hurt in any way, to console the family members and friends of those who died or were wounded, and to strengthen the hands of the rescue workers, medical professionals and caregivers. Amen.”

Yours in Providence,

Diane E. Melby