Statement from the Imam Concerning Violence in America

The Islamic Center of Pittsburgh joins America in shaking our heads in shame at the horrific attacks that took place recently in our country.

The continuous senseless killings that we hear about—along with what does not reach our newsfeeds—reminds us of a verse in the Quran which states:

“Whoever kills a person, without due process, but to spread terror in the earth, it is as if they have killed all of humanity; and whoever saves a life, it is as if they have saved all of humanity.” [Quran, ch 5, vs 32]

Those who recognize the true value and sanctity of irreplaceable human life, and work to protect it, no matter the origin, share in the good promise of these Divine Words.

As Muslims, no strangers to being targeted by hatred, we empathize with the victims and their families who are struggling with grief and confusion. We offer our sincere condolences and pray for their safety, personal closure, and strong recovery.

Violence borne of anger stoked by intense bigotry and fear mongering is a dangerous weapon in a world that is being dragged back to the worst of its capabilities, just as it tries to reach the highest of its ideals. Bigotry and ethno-nationalism around the world—and the United States in particular, with our easy gun access—threaten to tear apart the “global village” that the information age has brought us.

Finally, we demand our elected officials to come across party lines and make sincere efforts to agree upon and legislate practical solutions that will curb these violent trends in our country.

Imam Chris Caras