



### **Statement on July 3 shootings in Rifle**

*Archbishop Chaput and Bishop Gomez issued this letter Thursday, July 5, 2001, to be read at a community rosary at St. Mary Parish in Rifle.*

July 5, 2001

Dear brothers and sisters of St. Mary's Parish, and all who have gathered here tonight,

Like all Coloradans, we were stunned and saddened by the news of [the July 3] tragic events. Words can't ease the confusion many of you are feeling tonight, but we hope our prayers – and the prayers of so many Catholics throughout Colorado – will be a source of comfort for you and the whole Rifle community.

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of those who lost their lives in yesterday's violence. We pray that, during the difficult days ahead, each person touched by this violence will find peace in God's embrace. We pray especially for those who have died, that God will grant them eternal light and joy in His Kingdom.

May God strengthen, comfort and encourage each of you – and in the aftermath of this violence, may He lead all of us to be instruments of His peace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+ Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.  
Archbishop of Denver*

*+ Most Reverend José H. Gomez  
Auxiliary Bishop of Denver*