PRAYER LEADER: We gather today in solidarity with all the young people and their adult supporters who march in Washington, DC, to demand an end to gun violence in our nation. We also gather in spirit with the thousands of people marching in many other cities and towns to lend voices, petitions, and prayers in support of the courageous youth seeking to urge elected officials to provide for the safety and peace of all.

We begin our prayer with a reading from the prophet Isaiah.

READER ONE: Isaiah 2:1-22
It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the God shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that God may teach us God’s ways and that we may walk in God’s paths.” For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. God shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

SHORT VIDEO: Demand a Plan
https://youtu.be/64G5FfG2Xpg

PAUSE for reflection.

READER TWO: God, we come to you, once again, after another shooting. We ask you to receive into your loving care those who were killed, to care for those who were wounded or hurt in any way, to embrace in your loving care the young people who experienced the horror of these attacks, to console the family members and friends of those who died or were wounded, to strengthen the rescue workers, medical professionals, and caregivers.

We pray, too, for the shooter, as we must as Christians.

ALL: God of mercy, hear our prayer.

READER THREE: God, we are tired of the unwillingness to see this as an important issue. We are tired of those in power who work to prevent any real change. We are tired of those who say that gun violence can’t be reduced. We know that the tiredness we feel is the same tiredness that Jesus felt after his own struggles against injustice did not have the outcome he hoped for.

ALL: God of unbounded energy, hear our prayer.

READER FOUR: We are angry, God, at the seeming powerlessness of our community to prevent this. We are angry at the selfish financial interests that block change. We are angry that these shootings happen at all.
ALL: God of righteous anger, hear our prayer.

READER FIVE: God, please help us see that these feelings we have are the way that you move us to act. Help us see in these emotions your own desire for change. Help us see in these reactions your pushing us to do something. We know that you desire action. For Jesus did not stand by while people were being hurt. He plunged into their lives.

ALL: God of creative energy, hear our prayer.

PRAYER LEADER: If there are other petitions, please speak them aloud now or in the quiet of your heart.

ALL: God of unconditional love, hear our prayer.

READER SIX: And so, loving God, we ask your help in answering these questions:
How can we help?
How can we fight against gun violence?
How can we urge our political leaders to enact change?
How can we help people understand that this is an issue about life?
We are tired of excuses for the loss of life and angry that we are paralyzed by the loss of life. Turn our sadness into compassion. Turn our tiredness into advocacy. Turn our paralysis into the freedom to act.
Help us to be compassionate, to advocate, and to act, as your son did, merciful God.

ALL: AMEN! MAY IT BE SO!

This prayer is an adaptation by Sr. Erica Jordan, OP, of A Prayer to End Gun Violence by Fr. James Martin, SJ.