



**January 13, 2011**

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**Silver Spring, Maryland]** Mary Hughes, OP, president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, and Thomas P. Cassidy, SCJ, president of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, released the following statement following the tragic events of January 8, 2011 in Tucson, Arizona:

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men join the thousands of persons in this country in expressing our prayers for all the victims of the tragedy in Tucson and we send condolences to the families and friends of all who have died. We also pray for the mentally disturbed perpetrator of this terrible deed.

We commend all who serve this country through public service and we believe we must do all we can to assure that they are able to exercise this service free from fear of harm. While we have always encouraged US citizens to express their opinions about matters that affect our world and nations, our two conferences hold a strong belief that we must do so nonviolently. We hope and pray that the events in Tucson serve as an impetus for all people to continue public discourse in ways that respect differences and reflect civility. In addition, we hope that this tragedy will lead our country to pay greater attention to issues of mental illness and stronger gun control.

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