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Statement from Archbishop Mark S. Rivotuso regarding recent tragedies at Brown University and Australia

Like so many others, I am deeply saddened and troubled by recent acts of violence at Brown University in Rhode Island and abroad in Australia. Violence and hatred are always an affront to human dignity and can never be justified.

The tragedy in Australia was directed toward the Jewish community and I wish to express, in a particular way, my prayerful solidarity with the Jewish community within Alabama. Antisemitism is a grave sin and has no place in our society or in the human heart. Our Catholic faith compels us to stand firmly against hatred in all its forms and to be steadfast allies to our Jewish brothers and sisters, especially in moments of fear, pain and mourning.

I also offer my prayers for Ella Cook and for her family and friends. Ella, who was tragically killed at Brown University, was from Mountain Brook, Alabama, and her connection has touched many here at home. To all who grieve her loss, please know that the Catholic Church stands with you, praying for your safety, your healing and your peace.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to reject violence and to work tirelessly for understanding, dialogue and reconciliation. I urge all people of goodwill to choose words and actions that build up rather than tear down, and to recommit themselves to the sacredness of every human life.

May God bring comfort to all those impacted by this recent violence, and may He bring conversion to hearts hardened by hatred.

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