

# Standing Against Fear: Catholic Church Hosts Interfaith Gathering After Mass Shooting

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About 300 people gathered Thursday evening at St. Paul's Catholic Church to "grieve and rebuild the bonds of trust to overcome fear and hate" after the mass shooting Saturday at Walmart.

El Paso Interreligious Sponsoring Organization and Border Interfaith organized "Standing Against Fear" to give El Pasoans a space to mourn and to talk through trauma that might have occurred the day of the shooting.

The goal of the gathering also was to urge the community to come together and publicly demonstrate unity, work to publicly reassure vulnerable communities to trust local law

enforcement and government and to meet with congressional members and legislative delegation to propose common sense legislation to prevent violence in the future.

Attendees were asked to gather in groups of five and ask each other, "How are you feeling?" and "What do you need?"

Speakers included Bishop Mark J. Seitz with the Catholic Diocese of El Paso, U.S. Rep. Veronica Escobar, state Rep. César Blanco, County Judge Ricardo Samaniego and County Commissioner Carlos Leon.



*Catherine Washington, 18, recalls how she felt the day of the Walmart shooting during "Standing Against Fear," hosted by El Paso Interreligious Sponsoring Organization/Border Interfaith on Thursday, Aug. 8, 2019, at St. Paul's Catholic Church in El Paso. (Photo: BRIANA SANCHEZ/EL PASO TIMES)*