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Letter: It shouldn't take a disaster

This has been a trying time for the nation in the aftermath of the massacre in Connecticut. Innocent children and teachers lost their lives to a mentally ill shooter.

I am proud that the American people have responded positively to the needs of the survivors.

When there is a natural disaster or a tragedy like mass shootings, we respond by volunteering our time and support to those in need.

During Thanksgiving and Christmas we respond by giving to agencies that provide clothing, presents and food for the poor. The question that I ask, though, is why does it take a disaster or a season for us to unite for a common good? When the disaster or the holidays are over, what then?

The poor still need food and clothing. The issues of loss and devastation are still with us. Where do we go from here? We are a great country with enormous resources. There is no reason for a good number of children to go hungry. There is no reason for the lack of mental health needs being met for the poor. There is no reason for a lack of health care. There is no reason for the lack of a living wage. There is no reason for people losing their lives to a gunman bent on killing.

The list goes on and is immense in its scope.

What can we do to be proactive rather than reactive in providing for the county's most vulnerable citizens? It is my hope that we sit down and reason with each other and come up with a solution to these issues.

Let us remember that Christmas is more than a season, it is a way of life; and in this realization we can move forward to continue being the great country that we are.

Bishop Jerry A. Wood, Jr.

United Independent Catholic Church

Springfield