

The Candlelight Vigil

Mumbai Terror Attack, November 26–29, 2008

On November 26–29 a coordinated terrorist attack struck Mumbai, India.

Over 188 human lives lost, more than 293 injured.

On December 4, the UCI community came together in a Candlelight Vigil, organized by our students, to commemorate the victims of this tragedy.



There was an editorial by Rosa Brooks in today's L.A. Times about how doggedly terrorism has pursued the growth of human societies. The attacks in Mumbai are an appalling reminder of how vulnerable we are as humans, not only to base acts of violence, but to the horror that these attacks are meant to instill; a part of our grief and our anger at the deaths of more innocent people is the inescapable awareness that it can and probably will happen again—as long as people can be conditioned to such extremities of hate and blind adherence.

Our challenge in the wake of this tragedy is to remember that our courage and our human spirit are stronger than bullets and grenades. History has proved this over and over again, no matter the weapon. As a city, Mumbai will return to its former majesty, its bustling energy slowly emerging and regaining equilibrium. The innocent who have died will be remembered; the wounds of grief will eventually heal over.

Hopefully our human spirit will thrive too. Hopefully we will all heal and the scars of all the acts of terror that occur daily around the world will fade, even as new ones form. Because terrorism thrives on fear—on the *dread* it produces in us—its true enemy is embodied in the strength of spirit that comes from acceptance, compassion, endurance, and peace building; from embracing a vision of the world that does not feed desperation, fanaticism, and hate.

Let us honor the memories of those who have been taken from us in these terrible days of terror by praying for the strength of spirit to overcome all the fear and hatred we each may hold in our own hearts. For each of us is part of the whole, each of us contributes to the soul of the world, and all of us, together, can build on love until there is nothing left of terror. Don't we owe this to those who have died because of others' hate? Don't we owe this to our children? Don't we owe this to ourselves? Don't we owe this to the future?

— MANUEL N. GÓMEZ
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