

United Against Hate Presentation – St. Joseph’s
Remarks by Kevin G. Ritz
January 7, 2024

- Good morning.
- My name is Kevin Ritz. I am the United States Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee. What that means is that I was presidentially appointed to be the United States' chief lawyer in this area.
- Thank you very much for inviting us to be here with you. Thanks to Father Tony Romo, his church, Inés Negrete and CasaLuz.
- At the Department of Justice, we uphold the rule of law, protect civil rights, and keep our country safe. That's our mission statement.
- Today we'll talk about how we protect civil rights in Memphis and Tennessee.
- The United Against Hate program is one of our newest Department of Justice initiatives.
- I am concerned about the increase in hate crimes in the United States and Tennessee. From Charleston to Charlottesville, Pittsburgh, El Paso and Buffalo, the threat of extremist and hate-based violence is real.
- At the Department of Justice, we have a fundamental obligation to protect the right of every person to live at home, work, or shop, without fear of being attacked because of how they look or where they are from.
- Last year I created a National Security and Civil Rights Unit in our district. We now have a dedicated team of prosecutors focused on prosecuting hate crimes, civil rights violations, domestic terrorism, and related crimes. We work closely with the FBI.
- But people may not know what a hate crime looks like or who to talk to if they have questions.
- That's why we have this community outreach program. I want you to know that we want to know if someone is a victim of a hate crime or any other crime.
- You can help us prevent hate crimes from happening, and support victims.

- Call 911. Report it to the FBI. We want to help protect everyone's civil rights.
- Thank you again for inviting us to be here today.