



## ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF REGINA OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

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March 18, 2019

Dear members of the Muslim community in Regina,

It is with deep sadness that we have heard the news from New Zealand of the shootings at two mosques during Friday prayers. Our shock at this tragedy brings to mind the shooting in Quebec City in January 2017, and of the attack on the synagogue in Pittsburgh last October. Our thoughts and prayers turn to the families of the victims and all of the Muslim community. We pray that God may give comfort to the grieving and hope to those in fear.

We offer our solidarity to the Muslim community of Regina as you respond to this senseless violence. We commit ourselves to working with you to address Islamophobia and all forms of hatred, particularly that which is directed to immigrant and refugee communities. If there is any way that we can assist you in your time of need, please ask.

On Friday, Pope Francis sent a telegram to the Muslim community in New Zealand. Mindful of the efforts of the security and emergency personnel in this difficult situation, Pope Francis prayed for the healing of the injured, the consolation of those who grieve the loss of their loved ones, and for all affected by this tragedy. Commending those who have died to the loving mercy of Almighty God, Pope Francis invoked the divine blessings of comfort and strength upon the nation.

In a similar way, the Catholic Bishops of Canada wrote to Muslims in Canada upon hearing news of the horrendous shootings in Christchurch. Promising that the Catholic community of Canada will continue to pray for the Muslim community, the bishops also remind us of the "Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together" recently issued by The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmed el-Tayeb and Pope Francis when they met February 4th in Abu Dhabi. In this document we read:

The protection of places of worship – synagogues, churches and mosques – is a duty guaranteed by religions, human values, laws and international agreements. Every attempt to attack places of worship or threaten them by violent assaults, bombings or destruction, is a deviation from the teachings of religions as well as a clear violation of international law.

Faithful to God who is merciful and compassionate, together our communities are called now to work together to promote understanding and harmony in our country.

In peace and fraternity,

Archbishop Donald Bolen  
Archdiocese of Regina

- \* CCCB letter attached
- \* Pope Francis sends condolences for victims of New Zealand shooting

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-03/pope-francis-christchurch-new-zealand-shooting-mosques.html>

\* Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together  
[https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/travels/2019/outside/documents/papa-francesco\\_20190204\\_documento-fratellanza-umana.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/travels/2019/outside/documents/papa-francesco_20190204_documento-fratellanza-umana.html)