



Church leaders unite in solidarity with Jewish community following Bondi tragedy

Adelaide Anglican leaders have joined the Primate of Australia in condemning the â??incomprehensible horrorâ?• of the shooting at Bondi Beach, calling on churches across the diocese to open their doors for prayer and standing in solidarity with the Jewish community.

[In a joint statement](#) issued by the Anglican leaders of the Province of South Australia, the Right Reverend Sophie Relf-Christopher, the Right Reverend Jeremy James, and the Venerable Simon Waters expressed their profound grief following the terrorist attack that targeted Jewish Australians celebrating a religious festival.

â??To murder faithful Jewish Australians who are celebrating a peaceful religious festival is an almost incomprehensible horror,â?• the leaders stated.

Local Support and Action

Acting swiftly in response to the tragedy, Bishop Sophie, Administrator of the Adelaide Diocese, wrote directly to local Jewish leadersâ??Rabbi Franklyn Salzman, Mr. Warren Bund, and Rabbi Yossi Engelâ??to offer condolences on behalf of all Adelaide Anglicans.

â??We share with you, and the whole nation, in profound grief,â?• Bishop Relf-Christopher wrote, assuring the Jewish community of the churchâ??s â??commitment to work tirelessly until hatred and

disregard for any human life are repudiated in Australiaâ?•.

Bishop Sophie has also written to churches throughout the diocese, asking them to open their doors for community prayers whenever possible.

Following a conversation with Mr. Warren Bund, a leader in the Adelaide Jewish community, Bishop Relf-Christopher noted that the South Australian Police (SAPOL) had been â??wonderfully responsiveâ?• and handled the local threat level professionally. She expressed hope that a â??generosity of spirit and a sense of communityâ?• would become the stateâ??s inspiration in the days ahead, rather than hatred.

A National Call for Compassion

The reaction in Adelaide was echoed nationally by the Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, the Right Reverend Dr. Mark Short. He described the event as a â??dreadful act of anti-Semitic violenceâ?• and said that Anglican Christians â??stand and weep in solidarity with the Jewish communityâ?•.

Dr. Short noted the poignancy of the attack occurring during a season of light for both faiths. â??At this time of year members of the Jewish community light candles to remember the re-dedication of the temple while Christians await the coming of Jesus as the light of the world,â?• he said. â??Instead of allowing evil and prejudice to divide us, we must be inspiredâ?I to respond together as a nation with compassion and understandingâ?•.

Catholic Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher OP issued a strong condemnation of the attack, calling for an immediate end to the â??atmosphere of antisemitismâ?• that has festered in Australia. Revealing his own Jewish heritage through his great-grandmother, Archbishop Fisher declared that â??an attack on the Jews is an attack on all of usâ?•.

Archbishop Fisher announced that Sydneyâ??s Catholic community would open its educational and counselling services to their â??Jewish neighboursâ?• while their own facilities face lockdowns or are overwhelmed.

Finding Hope in Heroism

While acknowledging the â??righteous angerâ?• such attacks provoke, the South Australian provincial leaders highlighted the heroism of bystanders as a beacon of hope. They specifically honoured Ahmed al Ahmed, a bystander who tackled and disarmed one of the gunmen.

â??Even amid these terrible events, we are reminded that goodness abides,â?• the Province statement read, honouring Ahmed along with the police, ambulance officers, and lifesavers who rushed to help.

As the Advent season continues, the leaders urged the community to let â??love restore hope to our neighbourhoods and communities across Australiaâ?• and to redouble efforts to keep all Australians safe.

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