



CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE
OF SYDNEY

MEDIA STATEMENT

Monday, 15 December 2025

TERRORIST ATTACK ON SYDNEY'S JEWISH COMMUNITY MUST LEAD TO CHANGE

A Statement from the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP

We all share in profound grief and righteous anger following last night's terrorist attack on Bondi Beach. That a celebration of the Jewish feast of Hanukkah could end in at least 16 dead, including a young child, and many more injured, horrifies ordinary Australians. The brazen and callous disregard for human life, and the hatred of some people toward all Jews, is an unspeakable evil that must be repudiated by every Australian.

Any attack on individual Jews is an attack on the whole Jewish community; and any attack on the Jewish community is an affront to our way of life as Australians. It must be condemned unequivocally and justice for the victims delivered swiftly.

For more than two years, an atmosphere of public antisemitism has festered leading to intimidation, division, and the normalisation of incendiary language. Opposite my own cathedral in Hyde Park there have been weekly demonstrations where inflammatory messages have been regularly articulated which could only have "turned up the temperature" and perhaps contributed to radicalisation. This must stop.

My great grandmother was a Jew and so I have Jewish heritage in my own family. Jesus was a Jew, born of a Jewish mother, born a subject of the Jewish Law. Mary and Joseph were Jews. So too our father Abraham and all the prophets, as well as all twelve of the apostles. Christians are children of the Jews. And so, an attack on the Jews is an attack on all of us.

Even amidst such dark evil, traces of goodness were demonstrated last night: in the extraordinary bravery from police, ambulance officers and lifesavers, as well as from bystanders; and in the generosity of spirit of those offering help to those affected.

On behalf of Sydney's Catholic community, I extend the deepest condolences to our Jewish brothers and sisters. Please be assured of our prayers and closeness during this time for all the victims of this attack, their families, and the entire community. We love our Jewish neighbours and friends, and we must do all we can to keep them safe.

The Catholic community will redouble its efforts to combat antisemitism through education and preaching. We have offered our educational and counselling services to our Jewish neighbours while any of their services are locked down or overwhelmed. We will have many services of prayer for the dead, injured and traumatised.

Hanukkah and Christmas occur around the same time as festivals of faith and family, of gifts and especially of light. We pray that the God of light will grant wisdom to our leaders and pour healing and hope upon our community at this time.

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