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Statement from Bishop Peter Ingham

I join Pope Francis today and the entire Catholic community in expressing my horror and condemnation of the recent attack in Orlando, USA, which the Vatican has aptly described as “homicidal folly and senseless hatred”.

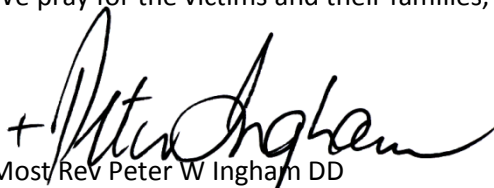
Pope Francis has asked that we join in prayer and compassion for the families of the victims and all the injured. Every human being is unique, irreplaceable, created in God’s image and loved by God. We as a global Catholic Church community also know what it is to lose members of our community to hateful violence. We must stand in prayerful solidarity with victims and all who are mourning the tragic and senseless loss of human life.

In my statement last week in relation to the Australian Family Association (AFA) presentation planned for St Therese West Wollongong tonight, I echoed Pope Francis’ description of Jesus “who set forth a demanding ideal yet never failed to show compassion and closeness to the frailty of individuals”.

Our primary call to action today is to stand together as the Illawarra community in solidarity against violence. While concerns remain about the implications of changing the definition of civil marriage, I believe that, in the interests of compassion and sensitivity to all who are mourning the tragic events in Orlando, this conversation would be better suited for another time, and therefore tonight’s presentation has been postponed.

UNITY Wollongong has invited us to join a vigil outside the gates of St Therese West Wollongong tonight at 7.00pm. I have contacted UNITY to accept their invitation. After consultation with the Parish Priest, Fr David O’Brien, we have offered for the vigil to be held inside the gates of St Therese to ensure a safe event. I will be attending tonight’s vigil and I am calling on those who were planning to attend the AFA presentation also to join me in peace and solidarity.

We pray for the victims and their families, and for peace in an increasingly dangerous world.


+ Peter Ingham
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