



Franciscan Action Network

Transforming the World in the Spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare

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FRANCISCAN ACTION NETWORK STANDS WITH MUSLIM BROTHERS AND SISTERS

As Franciscan and Muslim leaders we join together in calling for an end to vitriolic hate speech, attitudes and actions against Muslims. We condemn acts of hatred and violence committed by any group against another. Zechariah 7:10 declares that the word of the Lord said: "...do not plot evil against one another in your hearts. But they refused to listen: they turned their backs and stopped their ears so as not to hear." The Koran 25:63 states: "The servants of the Compassionate are they who walk upon the earth humbly, and when the ignorant address them, they answer "Peace!"

Some who are ignorant, who have closed their hearts and ears, have hijacked both the Christian and Muslim faith traditions by preaching hatred and promoting violence, thus acting against the Word of God. We urge them to look deep into their hearts to find the peace and love of God. In 1928, Adolf Hitler said: "We tolerate no one in our ranks who attacks the ideas of Christianity. Our movement is Christian." Adolf Hitler no more represented Christianity in 1928 than Daesh represents Islam today.

We join other faith based organizations in decrying current rhetoric that is contrary to our religious traditions, scriptures, and values. Core to all major faith traditions is love of God and neighbor, i.e. all our sisters and brothers of every race, culture, country and religious belief. Welcoming the stranger is called for in our scriptures. The rhetoric of exclusion, religious testing, hatred and violence is also anti-American. Whether shouted from the rooftops or more subtly expressed, especially by candidates for public office and legislators, such language is both morally abhorrent and dangerous for maintaining our identity as United States citizens. History has shown us that whenever we dehumanize a group of people whether through our words or actions it could lead to war or terrorism.

We not only express our solidarity with all our brothers and sisters, we pledge to advocate on their behalf and to educate others. Franciscans have a particular responsibility to act on behalf of the Muslim community, because we have in our history and tradition the meeting of St. Francis of Assisi with Sultan al-Kamil in the 13th century during the Fifth Crusade. Both Francis and the Sultan took the risk of meeting during this violent time in an effort to foster peace and mutual understanding.

Together as Franciscan Christians and Muslims, we call for an end to hateful, divisive language, we condemn acts of violence against Muslims, and we appeal to our government to generously welcome refugees from Syria and Iraq fleeing Daesh violence. We stand together: drawing on the teaching of our faith traditions that fear is overcome by love and compassion.

Signed in faith and solidarity,

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