



The Manitoba Multifaith Council joins the global chorus of horror and dismay at the recent waves of violence perpetrated by some accounts and to some perspectives attributable to the religious impulse, in the immolation of 19 Yazidi women by the forces of Daesh (IS) in early June and the shootings in the Pulse nightclub in Orlando in the early hours of June 12. We lift up several foundational concerns that extend beyond the visceral revulsion provoked by such acts.

We acknowledge and confess that all too often in the course of human history religious communities of all stripes have betrayed the founding impulses of their communities. We pledge yet again to stand by the conviction, as stated in many of our religious traditions, that within Creation all human beings are made in the image of the Divine; and that consequently, the image of God in all humans implies that each person has “infinite value, equality and uniqueness.” (Rabbi Irving Greenberg).

We hold these convictions to be universal human values, regardless of race, religion, orientation, or nationality.

We call upon all Manitobans, whether people of faith or no faith; we call on people of good will everywhere to:

- Resist superficial analysis of these tragedies and the religious implications of each;
- To suspend judgement concerning motivations and meaning in the face of apparent meaningless;
- To refrain from xenophobic suspicion of the other;
- To pursue open dialogue amongst people of differing religious traditions and ideological positions;
- To seek always and everywhere to be agents of reconciliation, instruments of peace and understanding in contrast to the demagogue urgings of those who would pervert religious faith or human ideals to the demonic ends of hatred and bigotry;
- To embrace complexity in all aspects of the human adventure.

We urge the leaders of our province and our nation to recall the provisions of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which recognize the integrity and liberty of religious expression and to apply that recognition to all policies of our province and nation, whether domestic or global.

We remember, soberly and hopefully John Dunne’s conviction that “no (one) is an island,” and the wisdom of the late Rabbi Harry Joshua Stern that we will have “one world or no world.”