



March 30, 2020 | Religious Leaders in Canada in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic  
MEDIA RELEASE

## Hope, Gratitude and Solidarity

### A Message to Canadians from Religious Leaders in Canada in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

On March 30, 2020, more than 80 religious leaders from across Canada issued a common message to all who call Canada home, expressing the need for hope, gratitude and solidarity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This ecumenical and interfaith message is a response by religious leaders from across Canada which was initiated by the [Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) and [The Canadian Rabbinic Caucus](#) with the support and coordination of [The Canadian Council of Churches](#) and the [Canadian Interfaith Conversation](#). The French translation was funded by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The message reflects a unity of thought and concern among Canada's diverse religious communities in the face of the uncertainty, fear and anxiety surrounding COVID-19. Acknowledging the significant impact of COVID-19, the message reminds Canadians of the hope we share, the reasons we have to give thanks, and the ways we can act together for the good of one another.

The full messages in English and French are attached. The messages are also available online in English (<https://www.councilofchurches.ca/news/hope-gratitude-and-solidarity/>) and French (<https://www.conseildeseglises.ca/les-nouvelles/esperance-gratitude-et-solidarite/>).

### Key quotations

- “In spite of present sufferings, which can seem overwhelming at times, the flames of hope cannot be extinguished. Love, which gives life its fullest meaning, continues to seek out the common good in spite of individual difficulties.”
- “We urge all people in Canada to listen and follow attentively the directions of our Public Health officials and government leaders. We, as religious leaders, pledge to lead by example. We all must act together in confronting this virus. While everyone is vulnerable during this crisis, let us not forget those in our society who, prior to COVID-19, were already vulnerable to health and social ailments. As religious leaders, we raise our collective voices to highlight the necessity for greater attention to the needs of the homeless, the incarcerated, the elderly and those already suffering from social isolation. We remember too those people, especially women and children who face abuse and violence, who are not safe at home and may suffer additional abuse and violence as stress increases.”
- “We earnestly pray for healing, for the continued efforts to relieve human suffering, and for perseverance throughout these challenging times. As history records these moments for our country's future, let us pray that, in the face of COVID-19, we respond with an abundance of hope, gratitude and solidarity, trusting in the loving and ever merciful God, the source of all hope.”

### About

**The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB)** is the national assembly of the Catholic Bishops of Canada. It was founded in 1943 and officially recognized by the Holy See in 1948. After the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), it



became part of a worldwide network of Episcopal Conferences, established in 1965, as an integral part of the life of the universal Church.

**The Canadian Rabbinic Caucus (CRC)** provides the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) with guidance and input on behalf of synagogues across Canada and across the spectrum of Jewish religious practice. The CRC meets regularly by conference call and serves as a spokesperson on public policy matters affecting Jewish religious life and freedom of religion in Canada. Membership in the CRC is open to rabbis from any denomination of Judaism. The CRC is led by an 18-member executive committee (six Reform, six Conservative, and six Orthodox) which, in turn, elects Co-Chairs.

**The Canadian Council of Churches (CCC)** is a broad and inclusive ecumenical body, now representing 26-member churches including Anglican; Eastern and Roman Catholic; Evangelical; Free Church; Eastern and Oriental Orthodox; and Historic Protestant traditions. Together these member churches comprise 85% of the Christians in Canada. The Canadian Council of Churches was founded in 1944.

**The Canadian Interfaith Conversation (CIC)** gathers representatives of 41 faith communities and faith-based organizations who believe that people of faith can contribute positively to the benefit of all people in Canadian society. As we note in our Charter Vision, the practice of religion and its impact on the identities of Canadians is an enduring feature of this country. We advocate for religion in a pluralistic society and in Canadian public life, believing that conversation is essential to doing so effectively.

While media is encouraged to contact any of the endorsing signatories to the message, the following resource people are available to receive inquiries and to direct you to other signatories to the joint message as requested.

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