

Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary



October 30, 2018

Dear Rabbi Osadchey and members of Beth Tzedec Synagogue,

I would like to share my prayers and support for the Jewish Community at this time of so great a loss. Such acts as those in Pittsburgh are heinous, moral crimes that desecrate the image of G-d placed in every human. I also echo the sentiments of my Brother Bishops from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, who said yesterday that this "is a terrible and clear manifestation of anti-Semitism, a scourge which most regrettably persists in our world today and is of great concern to the Jewish community, the Catholic Church and society as a whole."

Together, the Church and synagogue must continue to work for an end to anti-Semitism in all its forms. I remain committed with you to live out our covenant signed in 2015 by Bishop Henry, who represented the Catholic community, and Rabbi Osadchey, who represented the Jewish community, to "defend the other if any of us is discriminated against or harassed for the reason of belief or practice".

If the community has any needs, please know that the Catholic community is here to assist.

My deepest appreciation for inviting me to give the sermon at your Synagogue on October 27, on the Torah portion of *Parshat Vayeira, 7th Portion* (Genesis 22:1-22:24). I recognize that this sermon and my talk, opened the Lil Faider Interfaith Scholar-in-Residence Project on Christianity from 2018-2019. My thanks to Lil Faider who has been a champion for interfaith understanding in Southern Alberta for many decades. I pray that in the coming year, we will continue to give importance to religious literacy, which from our tradition, in the words of The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue says religious literacy: "is truly part of the dialogue of salvation initiated by G-d".

I pray that the Lord of infinite goodness, might strengthen our bonds of friendship as well as the desire to foster a constant dialogue for the good of all.

And to repeat the words of righteous Job as stated in our joint covenant, "to God I commit my cause, who does great things and unsearchable, marvelous things without number." (Job 5:8-9)

Peace be upon you,

†Most Reverend William T. McGrattan, D.D.
Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary