



## Archdiocese of Santa Fe

Office of Communications/Social Media

4000 St. Joseph's Pl NW | Albuquerque, NM 87120-1714

Leslie M. Radigan, Director

505.831.8180 | LRadigan@asfnm.org

archdiosf.org

### STATEMENT

#### **Most Rev. John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, and Regis Pecos, Former Governor of Cochiti Pueblo Condemn Violence and Promote Dialogue in the Wake of Recent Events in Rio Arriba County, New Mexico**

ALBUQUERQUE – Tuesday, October 3, 2023– IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, and Regis Pecos, Former Governor of Cochiti Pueblo have released the following statement regarding the violence in Rio Arriba County, NM:

The violence witnessed in Rio Arriba County on September 28 stemming from the reinstallation of a statue should raise alarms for everyone, regardless of our ancestral histories and current ideologies. We pray for the families who experienced this violence and for the family of the shooter.

In the midst of this sad event, we should cling to the hope of dialogue and communal respect and love experienced in 2018, with the redefining of the Santa Fe Fiestas and Entrada. With groups coming together in mutual respect, a great reconciliation took place, as people of goodwill shared their values and found common ground.

To complete the task of recognizing the dignity of all human beings given us through the wonderful gift of New Mexico's multi-cultural experiences, this convening and dialogue must be kept at the forefront of our continuing journey learning from the hardship of violence.

This calls upon all of us to condemn the violence that threatens our efforts to heal from the past. In March 2023, Pope Francis renounced the 550-year-old Doctrine of Discovery often used to justify the legacy of colonialism. The Catholic Church formally "repudiates those concepts that fail to recognize the inherent human rights of Indigenous peoples." Pope Francis also apologized for the pain caused by the boarding schools and the theft of children, many of whom never returned home, dying while in boarding schools.

Faith and hope carry us, and love and compassion seal us in reverence of one another through our shared faith. We call on our brothers and sisters of all New Mexico communities to be patient and compassionate with one another. We must ask ourselves, what do we want our children and future generations to inherit from us? Violence should never be the answer. Violence is devastating our children and families. Our shared faith calls upon all of us to stand together against such actions destroying our community spirit and vitality. --END