



# Archdiocese of Santa Fe

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## STATEMENT

### **Archbishop John C. Wester Calls for an End to Antisemitism and Peace in the Holy Land**

ALBUQUERQUE – Thursday, December 14, 2023—IMMEDIATE RELEASE—Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, has made the following statement calling for an end to antisemitism and peace in the Holy Land:

The horror of the massacre perpetrated by Hamas on Israel on October 7, 2023, the day of Shemini Atzeret, a Jewish holiday that ends the Sukkot festival, continues to reverberate throughout the world and in our hearts.

The unspeakable atrocities committed by Hamas against the Jewish people are grotesquely redolent of the Holocaust, the evil of which we must never forget. Yet, the crimes against humanity on that fateful October day have led to further violence in the resurgence of antisemitism that has raised its ugly head in our communities in the United States and abroad. While we cannot undo the sins committed on October 7 of this year, we certainly can confront racist calumnies aimed at our Jewish brothers and sisters. As Pope St. Paul VI declared in *Nostra Aetate* on October 28, 1965:

*Furthermore, in her rejection of every persecution against any man, the Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of antisemitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.*

I call upon all of us in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe to do our part to reject actively and vociferously any form of antisemitism in our communities.

Such vile expressions of hatred and ignorance have no place in our lives. We give thanks for the close ties we have with the Jewish faith and the Jewish people. Together, we can move closer to a peaceful world as we draw upon the sacred beliefs of our respective faiths. May God grant us the grace of living together in peace.

I implore all Catholics in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe to pray for peace in the Holy Land. While I recognize the right of the state of Israel to defend its citizens from all forms of violence, especially the unspeakable violence perpetrated against innocent men, women, and children on October 7, I cannot help but lament the tragic loss of innocent Palestinian lives in the ongoing war between Hamas and Israel. Our prayers transcend borders and are rooted in the sanctity of all human life. Each and every human being is a Child of God and has dignity, worth, and value. The killings in October tragically initiated an age-old recurrence of violence and death. When will it end? I realize the complexity of the issues playing out in the Holy Land today, and like so many, I also realize the killing must stop. Let us pray that every effort will be made by both sides of the conflict to end the killings immediately and seek other means to find a way for the residents of the Holy Land to live together in peace. Let us also pray that terrorist groups that fanatically cling to an ideology that does not respect the sanctity of human life will have a change of heart and put human lives above whatever ideology motivates them.

Such a metanoia is called for by the Hebrew Scriptures, the Koran, and the New Testament. Let us pray that all the people of the Book will live by the Book. And let us pray in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe that the Prince of Peace, whom we await this Christmas, will touch the hearts of all world leaders, and lead them to find the path of just and lasting peace in our war-torn world.

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