



CATHOLIC  
ARCHDIOCESE  
OF SYDNEY



## MEDIA STATEMENT

Tuesday, 16 April 2024

### WORSHIP WITHOUT FEAR

*A Statement from the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP*

The stabbing of Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel and Father Isaac Royel is shocking and has caused distress to many in the community.

Houses of prayer have traditionally been places of peace and solace, refuge and sanctuary and so the video footage of the attack upon a religious leader during a religious service inside a church has been especially confronting. The images of the violence that subsequently occurred outside the church are also confronting.

We have seen these types of events in other countries but, up until now, Australia has been largely free from this type of blatant violence in and around places of worship.

Every person in this country, be they bishop or priest, rabbi or imam, minister or congregant, should be able to worship in safety, without fear that they might be subject to acts of violence while gathering in prayer.

I urge the faithful to not respond to these events with fear, avoiding places of worship because they are worried about further attacks, nor with anger, engaging in acts of reprisal or revenge. The best response to violence and fear is prayer and peace.

On behalf of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, and in solidarity with other religious leaders, I offer prayerful support to Bishop Emmanuel, Father Royel and all others affected. May the God of peace reign in our land.

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