



We proclaim a crucified Christ

1Cor1.23

15 December 2025

STATEMENT

Response to the events at Bondi Beach

Yesterday, as a quiet summer evening was settling, and as the festival lights of Hanukkah were being lit, darkness enveloped our Jewish brothers and sisters in a targeted attack against them. Our nation is in shock, and a community of our nation has been devastated, by the violence that unfolded on Bondi Beach.

Today, we begin to name clearly the horror of what has occurred. This evil act of violence against our Jewish friends has deeply wounded our common humanity. What transpired was an overwhelming act of desecration. That this took place as families and friends gathered at Bondi to celebrate Hanukkah — a festival proclaiming light in the face of darkness — deepens the pain and outrage of this moment.

I stand in unequivocal solidarity with the Jewish community in Australia, and reach out in sorrow, friendship, and resolve. I call upon all people of good will to do the same.

In the face of calculated hatred and terrifying violence, we must reject knowing silence and calculated indifference. We must choose to be present, to pray, and to stand in solidarity.

Together, we pray in grief and lament for those who have lost their lives. We pray for strength and healing for those who have been injured and traumatised. We pray for all who carry the heavy burden of dread in the wake of this violence. We hear their cry, we see their fear, we share in their grief. We entrust our Jewish friends – our neighbours and fellow Australians – to the embrace of God.

Yet even in devastating darkness, there is light. Hanukkah proclaims that light cannot be extinguished by darkness. Our faith, too, calls us to be a light for the world — to resist despair, to name evil truthfully, and to move together from desolation toward hope.

In response to this act of violence and desecration, I invite all people of goodwill to gather at St Patrick's Cathedral East Melbourne **tomorrow, Tuesday 16 December, at 1:00pm for a Mass of Reconciliation.**

This will be a moment of prayer, remembrance, and recommitment — a public act of turning again toward peace and the sanctity of life. I extend a particular invitation to our Jewish sisters and brothers, as a sign of shared sorrow and determined hope.

May the God of all humanity draw us from this darkness onto a path of light. May we be strengthened to stand together, to reject hatred in all its forms, and to bear witness — through prayer and action — to a future shaped not by fear, but by solidarity, justice, and peace.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'P' followed by 'A' and 'C', with a small cross symbol to the left of the 'P'.

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne