

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Catholic Church sends message of peace to Muslims**

The Catholic Church in Australia has marked the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan by reaffirming the shared principles of peace, justice and human dignity for all.

Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference president Archbishop Francis Carroll said in the wake of September 11, the Bali bombing and hostilities in the Middle East, it was important to remember the shared tradition of Christianity and Islam.

"Recent events in the United States, the Middle East and Indonesia have impacted heavily on relations between our two faiths around the world," Archbishop Carroll said in a message to the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils .

"And I believe that Australian Catholics are concerned that our common Abrahamic tradition is being overlooked or exploited for sectarian or self-serving purposes.

"We understand our two faiths to share common principles of peace, justice and human dignity for all - principles that were strongly affirmed by religious leaders at the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi on 24 January this year.

"It is in this spirit then, that we offer you our best wishes for peace at the conclusion of the month of Ramadan."

Archbishop Carroll's message coincides with a similar message of peace from the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

"As believers in the One God, we see it as our duty to strive to bring about peace, Christians and Muslims," the statement from the Council president Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald said.

Contact: Debra Way, Communications Officer, Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference on (02) 6201 9859 or 0414 880 475.

