

Monday 15 December 2025

NO POLITICS - IGNORANT AND VIOLENT ANTISEMITISM MUST END

Statement from Bishop Anthony Randazzo, Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay

I write today with a heavy heart, in profound sorrow at the loss of innocent human life in the shooting at Bondi during the Jewish Festival of Hanukkah. Families have been shattered, communities left grieving, and our Jewish brothers and sisters once again subjected to fear, trauma, and hatred. No words can undo such loss, yet silence is not an option.

This is a moment of urgency for Australia. We must put down the ways of violence. We must reject hatred in all its forms. We must turn away from brutality and completely reject antisemitism. Violence corrodes the soul of a nation, and when it is directed at a people because of who they are, what they believe, or how they pray, it strikes at the very foundations of our common life.

I wish to speak clearly and respectfully. There has been a call from government and sections of the media to speak of this primarily as “evil”. While the moral horror of such acts is undeniable, civil authorities cannot and must not hide behind language alone.

The responsibility of our elected leaders is to protect the public, to legislate for the wellbeing of all Australian people, and to name, reject, and prosecute crime. The shooting of innocent people at Bondi is a crime. It must be called out as such. Where hate crime culture and behaviour have not been prevented, accountability is required across all sides of government.

This is not a time to play politics. Innocent people have had their lives taken. Families and communities are bereft. Our Jewish community has been abused, yet again.

As a Church, and as a society, we reaffirm our commitment to safeguard all people in our nation. This includes the vulnerable, the young, those new to our country and culture, migrants and refugees, and most especially at this moment, our brothers and sisters in the Australian Jewish community. You deserve more than fear. You deserve more than words offered after tragedy. You deserve to live freely, safely, and with dignity, not merely to survive in Australia, but to thrive.

Australia has benefited immeasurably from the active contribution of the Jewish community at every level of national life. When will we stand up and defend them? When will we stand with them in true solidarity, supporting their voice, their beliefs, and their rights as Australian citizens?

I speak from relationships, not abstractions. Some of my fondest childhood memories are of a family friend, Kate Greenstein, a lawyer and, in my estimation, a marvellous human being, who was a friend of my grandparents in Bankstown in the 1950s.

At the age of twelve, I visited my first synagogue. Over the years, I have been privileged to study Scripture in Jerusalem, taught by Christian, Jewish, and Muslim scholars. More recently, I have been blessed by friendship with Julian Leeser, the Federal Member for Berowra, within the Diocese of Broken Bay.

All of this has taught me that civilisation is built on human relationships of friendship, dignity, goodwill, and the desire to seek the good of the other.

This is the foundation of what many have called a civilisation of love. In such a civilisation, prejudice, ignorance, envy, and hatred find no home. It is sustained by faith, hope, and charity, virtues shared across Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and many world religions and philosophies, all present within the rich diversity of Australia.

I call on all people of goodwill to embrace faith, hope, and charity as a way of living. This invitation is genuine and respectful, offered with the best of intentions. Without these virtues, our country risks further decline into civil unrest, the brutality of violence, and the despair that follows murder and loss.

Together, let us demand compassionate care for all people, truthful and honest education for our young and for our whole community, and an end to ignorant and violent antisemitism, and indeed to all racial discrimination and abuse.

To our Jewish brothers and sisters, I say this clearly: this is not the Australia we know and love. We stand with you in grief, in solidarity, and in determination. You belong here. You are cherished here. May we, as a nation, prove this not only with words, but with courage, responsibility, and lasting action.

Most Rev Anthony Randazzo

Bishop of Broken Bay