



Bishop's House  
Corran Esplanade  
Oban PA34 5AB

16<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to send greetings and good wishes to you and all Hindus in Scotland as you celebrate the festival of Diwali later this month. I am also happy to send you the annual message from the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue in Rome.

This year the theme of the letter from the Pontifical Council is how we can promote conviviality and co-responsibility for the society and the world in which we all live. You will not be surprised to read that one way of doing this is through the work of interreligious dialogue. Many of us who are involved in interfaith relations know well the warmth and friendship that comes through getting to know one another, visiting one another's places of worship, experiencing one another's hospitality, and working together to better our society. This is a great witness to those who stir up hate, who are afraid of difference and retreat into their own closed communities.

With friendship and conviviality comes the recognition of our shared humanity, of our common civic identity as citizens of Scotland with a concern for peace and harmony in our society as well as our concern for the well-being of our planet which is in such danger from climate change and the decline in biodiversity. As people of faith, we are called to love one another, to love the country in which we live and to love the earth that gives us life and sustenance. It is this love that will develop within us and our communities a common sense of responsibility for the welfare of the human family and of the earth – our common home.

This is my prayer for you and your families as you celebrate the joyful festival of Diwali. With the Pontifical Council I pray that we "Christians and Hindus, joining hands with those of all other religious traditions and people of good will, promote, individually and collectively, the spirit of conviviality and co-responsibility to transform this world into a secure home for everyone to live in with peace and joy!"

Once again, on behalf of my colleagues the Bishops of Scotland, on my own behalf and on behalf of our Committee for Interreligious Dialogue and the Catholic community in Scotland I wish you and your families a joyful festival of Diwali and every blessing in this coming year.

Yours sincerely

Bishop Brian McGee, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles

President of the Scottish Bishops' Committee for Interreligious Dialogue