



Bishop's House
Corran Esplanade
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April 14th 2021

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to send you greetings from the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue for the holy month of Ramadan and the festival of 'Id. The theme of this year's letter is hope and it tells us that "we, Christians and Muslims, are called to be bearers of hope, for the present life and for the life to come, and to be witnesses, restorers and builders of this hope, especially for those experiencing difficulties and despair".

This has been a difficult year for all of us. Many have lost loved ones without being able to accompany them into death or being able to mourn with family and friends. Many have been pressurised by work and home schooling. Others have experienced loneliness and stress while others have found time to enjoy their homes and explore new interests. We have come to be grateful for the work of nurses and doctors, care workers, essential service providers – all those who keep our communities running smoothly and contribute to its well-being.

We have also become aware of our common humanity and the need for friendship and cooperation in society. I am sure we are all grateful for the strong witness of friendship between our communities as reflected in the bond between Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb, the Grand Imam of Al Azhar University who together signed the historic document on 'Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together'. I am sure too that the recent visit of the Pope to Ayatollah Sistani will be the start of a similar friendship.

I hope and pray that as we emerge from Covid restrictions we may do so with a renewed sense of human fraternity and a renewed commitment to continue the good relations between our two faiths and the work of interreligious dialogue here in Scotland.

For the moment, however, I am happy to send greetings and good wishes to you and the whole Muslim community in my own name, in the name of the Scottish Catholic Bishops and indeed the Scottish Catholic community. May you have a peaceful and fruitful Ramadan and a joyful 'Id al-Fitr. Ramadan Mubarak.

Yours sincerely

+ Brian McGee, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles

President of the Bishops' Committee for Interreligious Dialogue