

Out of Many, One – A Statement of Commitments

Out of Many, One. Representatives of diverse religious communities around Chicago, together we raise our voices against the bigotry, intimidation and violence that the 2016 national elections have unleashed within the body politic. A surge of Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, misogyny, and discrimination against immigrants, refugees, African-Americans, Native Americans, LGBTQ individuals, and people with disabilities has threatened the well-being of so many throughout our city and our nation. The virtues necessary to sustain our democracy are weakened when fundamental rights that hold our social fabric together are under assault.

Together we embrace the common ground of human dignity and higher ground of compassion. As religious leaders, we are painfully aware of humanity's capacity for scapegoating the most vulnerable in times of uncertainty. We refuse to allow our differences to be used as vessels of hatred or targets of oppression. Our diversity is our strength.

We assert and renew our commitment to fight religious discrimination in all forms. We stand in solidarity with our Jewish brothers and sisters and condemn violence and hatred against them and their sacred sites. We also stand in solidarity with our Muslim brothers and sisters against any attempts to create a Muslim registry. We commit ourselves to protecting the religious freedoms that contribute to our democracy and sustain our spiritual lives.

We assert and renew our commitment to work against systemic racism. We must put an end to the persistent and pernicious patterns of racial injustice in employment, housing, education, health care and criminal justice. White supremacist rhetoric can have no place in our political discourse or public life. Those who believe in freedom cannot rest.

We assert and renew our commitment to women. Our traditions may embrace different ideas about gender roles, but we stand together against actions and policies that degrade or restrict women's lives. We resist a culture that permits sexually predatory behavior and demeaning stereotypes. We celebrate women as leaders and as authors of their own experience. We commit our religious spaces as places where women are welcome, valued, listened to and respected.

We assert and renew our commitment to refugees and immigrants, who have always contributed to the civic, economic and cultural life of our nation. We will resist mass deportations of undocumented individuals and fight targeted bans on refugees. We stand in solidarity with communities and municipalities offering sanctuary. Many of our traditions contain sacred narratives of wanderers, and instructions to care for the stranger; how we respond reveals the moral character of our society.

We assert and renew our commitment to the LGBTQ community. We will not be silent about those who use political power to protect hate speech, refuse civil liberties and deny full participation in our common life based upon sexual orientation or gender identity.

We call upon our elected officials in the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, and Washington, D.C.—and we call upon our neighbors in the communities where we live and serve—to stand against injustice and hatred. Join us in renewing our civic landscape through a spirit of dignity, compassion, and respectful disagreement—living into our shared values and up to our highest ideals.

Solamente en conjunto – only together.