



Diocese of San Jose

Office of the Bishop

December 1, 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

With this letter, I wish to add my voice and the voice of the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of San Jose in an expression of deepest sorrow over the brutal act of violence directed at our Sufi brothers and sisters in Egypt.

We live in a time of brutality and undeniable disregard for human life, yet it is in times such as this that the measure of our faith is tried and tested. Although I am not unfamiliar with violence and its deep effect on the families of its victims, I cannot even imagine the anguish you are experiencing. At the same time, over the years my faith has helped me recognize the true power that comes to life when we are able to respond to hate with love and compassion.

The words of the poet, Rumi, came to mind, and have echoed in my heart for the past few days:

Sorrow prepares you for joy. It violently sweeps everything out of your house, so that new joy can find space to enter. It shakes the yellow leaves from the bough of your heart, so that fresh, green leaves can grow in their place. It pulls up the rotten roots, so that new roots hidden beneath have room to grow. Whatever sorrow shakes from your heart, far better things will take their place.

It is my prayer that we may stand in solidarity with the Sufi community to express our sorrow and acknowledge their - and our - pain. Be assured of my own renewed commitment to end intolerance. Be also assured that I will ask my priests to offer prayers for the Sufi community and for all religious minorities in Egypt so that through acts of solidarity and love, the Muslim, Christian, Jewish and Sufi communities might work together to end intolerance and violence, both here and abroad.

With every best wish and kind regard, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Patrick J. McGrath
Bishop of San Jose