



## **York Interfaith Group**



### **Pope Francis, 1936-2025**

#### **Message from the Chair**

I am writing this on the day we hear that Pope Francis has died. There are heartfelt messages about the Pope from all the members of the York Interfaith Group below which I am sure will be welcomed and appreciated by all our Catholic Friends here in York.

The need for world leaders with the vision, and care for the poor and oppressed is needed now more than ever. Pope Francis was committed to interfaith working so an inspiration to us all to recognise the value of what we do through York Interfaith Group and in all our different faith communities. We have more in common than divides us.

Tina Funnell, Chair

## **Editorial Note**

This York Interfaith Group bulletin is dedicated to remembering Pope Francis, especially in the context of his constant efforts to promote interfaith relationships. Our regular monthly newsletter will resume with its May issue early next week.

Rory Allen, editor

## **Messages from faith representatives**

### ***Sikh***

The Sikh Faith in York mourns the sad loss of Pope Francis this morning. A person of deep faith and interfaith.

Our prayers and thoughts are with all our Christian brothers and sisters for comfort and solace.

With sadness

Avtar Matharu

### ***Baha'i***

Our heartfelt condolences for the passing of Pope Francis.

He was a spiritual leader with empathy and love for all humanity and a man of much kindness.

The dear Pope will be in our prayers.

With all our love and sympathy for our Christian friends,

Mahmood Foroughi

### ***Jewish***

It is with deep sadness that I write to you today following the news of the passing of Pope Francis. Regardless of our individual faiths and traditions, we recognize the profound impact Pope Francis had on the world. His dedication to interfaith dialogue, his advocacy for the marginalized, and his consistent call for peace resonated far beyond the Catholic Church, touching the hearts of people across the globe.

In York, a city known for its rich history of religious diversity and collaboration, we understand the importance of acknowledging the loss of a figure who championed unity and compassion. His message of empathy and understanding is one that we, as leaders of our respective communities, strive to uphold in our daily work.

At this time of mourning, we collectively offer our condolences to our Catholic brothers and sisters.

I know that individually and collectively we are holding the Catholic community, and all those who are grieving, in our thoughts and prayers.

Sarah Hubbard, on behalf of York Liberal Jewish community.

## ***Muslim***

My sincere condolences to our Christian brothers and sisters.  
Such a big loss. He was an amazing man.

With sorrow, Rasha Ibrahim

Statement from York Mosque on the Passing of Pope Francis:

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

York Mosque extends its sincere condolences to our Christian neighbours and communities around the world on the passing of Pope Francis. We recognise his consistent advocacy for peace, justice, and compassion. His efforts to promote mutual understanding and human dignity serve as a reminder of the shared values that unite us. We pray that his legacy continues to inspire efforts towards harmony, empathy, and hope across all faiths and communities.

## ***Hindu***

On behalf of the Hindu community in York, I send my deepest and sincere condolences not only to Christians but to all of us. I have been following the news all morning and listening to his life and the whole world paying tributes to such a monumental leader and human being. He will be a great loss to the world not just as a religious leader, as Pope, but also as a great humanitarian.

God bless, Varsha Gulati

## ***Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints***

We pray that as the conclave meet to pray and seek the will of God in choosing a new Pope, they will be impressed to find someone who will continue to build upon the good work of Pope Francis. He will be missed for his efforts to seek peace and understanding amongst many faiths and influential leaders in the world. He said "Peacemaking calls for courage, much more so than warfare," and "A world full of hope and kindness is a more beautiful world," he told the BBC over the Christmas period in 2024.

I trust we can remember his example as we continue the work of building and strengthening our Interfaith and community relationships and in giving service in our small corner of the world.

The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has released a statement which is available at: <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/first-presidency-condolences-his-holiness-pope-francis>

With sincere condolences, love and continued prayers, on behalf of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints locally here in York.

Penny Coppin-Siddall

## ***Anglican***

The following is from a statement by the Archbishop of York:

‘Let us walk together, work together, pray together.’ These are the words Pope Francis said to me when we met in 2023. They sum up his vision for the church, both the Roman Catholic Church but also ecumenically. Francis’s whole life and ministry was centred on Jesus who comes among us not to be served, but to serve. We saw that compellingly in Francis’s service of the poor, his love of neighbour especially the displaced, migrant, the asylum seeker, his deep compassion for the well-being of the earth and his desire to lead and build the church in new ways. Francis showed us how to follow Jesus and encouraged us to go and do likewise.

The full statement is available at: <https://www.archbishopofyork.org/news/latest-news/statement-following-death-pope-francis>

Rory Allen

## ***Catholic***

Thank you so much for all your expressions of sympathy over the death of Pope Francis, and prayer for the Catholic community. It is so good to feel the solidarity of friends of other faiths. Please keep up the prayer as, before very long, the conclave begins which will elect his successor. Pope Francis did so much to promote values needed in the world today and we need a new Pope who will carry forward what he began.

With love to each one, Patricia Harriss

It's lovely to hear all the tributes to Pope Francis. It reminds us how important each human being is. However important or hidden our life is, it will leave an imprint on the world. That sounds a bit portentous, I think I'm trying to say that whatever our place in life, we will spread what is in our hearts, so we have to do our best, whether we are the pope or a dinner-lady. Pope Francis spread what was in his heart, a deep love for God and for people. We can do the same.

Best wishes to everyone, Mary Callan

**Some photos of Pope Francis, illustrating his commitment to his interfaith mission**



Pope Francis meeting Russell M. Nelson, President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in 2019



Pope Francis meeting the British Chief Rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, in 2015



Pope Francis meeting leaders of the British Muslim community in 2017



British Sikhs attended the inauguration of Pope Francis in 2013





Pope Francis meeting Bani Dugal, Principal Representative of the Baha'i International Community



Pope Francis at an ecumenical meeting in Sri Lanka including Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and Muslims, in 2015



Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York, meeting Pope Francis in 2023