



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

March 30, 2026

Dear Friends in the Jewish Communities of Edmonton:

The sacred festival of Pesach (Passover) in your calendar, and its proximity to our own Easter celebrations, gives me occasion to send my personal best wishes, and those of our entire Catholic community, to the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, to your rabbis and synagogue congregations, and to all members of the Jewish communities residing here in the Edmonton area.

As this is my first letter to you since my installation as the eighth Archbishop of Edmonton, I hope you will allow me to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for the warm welcome and generous friendship you have shown me at the time of my installation and at the beginning of my ministry here in Edmonton. I am inspired and thankful for the numerous positive and life-giving initiatives that have developed between Jews and Catholics in this city over many decades, and I pledge to continue building upon the firm foundations laid by my predecessors and other visionary and faith-filled leaders, who have contributed to the flourishing of this relationship over the years.

Reflecting on this and what it may be calling me and us to specifically in our local circumstances, I am aware that we are living through a time in history when antisemitism is, once again and tragically, on the rise around the world, including in our local context. Indeed, some of our churches have been marked with swastikas and other anti-Semitic graffiti in recent months, and so we are acutely aware of this issue in the wider society. In such times and circumstances, it seems to me that a message of authentic care and solidarity offered between our two religious traditions would be a tremendous gift that we could offer to one another during this time of sacred gathering.

In this spirit, I recall and make my own the teaching of the Second Vatican Council that the Catholic Church “decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone” (Nostra Aetate, 4). I honour the work of the last six decades of dialogue between Catholics and Jews that has given our Church new approaches to teaching

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and preaching about Jews and Judaism, and opened new avenues to practical collaboration between our two communities. I echo Pope Leo XIV's words, uttered in the wake of the terrorist attack at Bondi Beach in Australia: "Enough of these forms of anti-Semitic violence! We must eliminate hatred from our hearts."

Many people today are experiencing real suffering because of such hatred. What a witness of hope we could offer together to a world so often focused on discord, selfishness and malcontent! As Christians and Jews living in the Edmonton area, let us continually find ways to be beacons of light in these troubling times.

Dear Jewish friends, I want to assure you that I, and our Catholic Church everywhere, has the greatest interest to work with you to foster life-giving values locally and around the world. May the Eternal One bless and enlighten your communities and our cooperation, and may this message from our community to yours add to the joy of your celebrations at this sacred time of the year.

Chag Pesach Sameach! – Happy Passover!

With warmest regards,

+ Stephen A. Hero

✠ Most Rev. Stephen A. Hero
Archbishop of Edmonton