

*“Love each other deeply”*

Call of Churches associated in the Polish Ecumenical Council to counteract hatred

On Sunday, January 13th, news of a brutal attack on the Mayor of Gdańsk Paweł Adamowicz during the 27th Finale of the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity spread all over Poland. A day later we were moved by the information about his death.

These tragic events once again showed the conflicts and deep divisions present in our homeland, our Churches, communities, but also families. As Churches associated in the Polish Ecumenical Council, we wish to take a clear stand against all manifestations of hatred, including hate speech present in the public debate. Hatred distances us from one another, makes us cultivate prejudice and instead of building a strong society based on solidarity, we agree to perpetuate divisions.

God’s Word encourages us to strive for righteousness (*Follow justice and justice alone— Dt. 16,20*). At the same time, however, it clearly shows how we should behave towards one another: *Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. (1 P. 4, 8-11).*

We call on everyone to stop the spiral of hatred. For we are not divided in such a way that we cannot talk to each other or forgive each other. We should respect every human being. Every person, created in the image and likeness of God, has his or her dignity. It is our duty to oppose prejudice and hate speech and show solidarity with those who suffer because of them. Let us learn to talk to one another, let us not fight with each other. Let us also try to take action that will serve reconciliation and the common good.

In connection with the upcoming Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we encourage you to include in your services prayers to improve our relationship, to stop the spiral of hatred, and to pray for those who suffer and inflict pain. For all of us. We believe that with God's help we will come to our senses, learn to talk to each other, make good choices, and respect one another.