



PRESS RELEASE

Attack at Church in Northern France

A horrific and brutal attack has taken place at a Church in Rouen in Northern France resulting in the murder of an 84 year old priest.

It goes without saying that any murder is horrific but this latest attack is more brutal than others as it has included not only the targeting of an old man, but someone who is also a Priest and the attack taking place inside a Church.

Allah Almighty states in the Qur'an:

"Had not Allah repulsed the people from one another, ruin would have befallen the monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques in which Allah's Name are mentioned greatly. Allah will surely help those who help Him. Indeed Allah is all-strong, all-mighty" (Chapter 22 Verse 40).

As many exegesis of the Qur'an have mentioned, this verse outlines the importance of protecting places of worship. This understanding is given further elaboration by the noble companion and first Caliph in Islam, Abu Bakr (r) where he gave instructions to the Muslims not to kill women, children, the elderly, not to destroy places of worship or attack people therein (al-Muwwatta).

It is therefore imperative for us to understand Islam is a way of life that is very far from these actions. Rather, Islam teaches tolerance, compassion and benefiting and protecting others.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stated in a statement of his:

"A believer is someone that people are safe concerning their lives and their wealth" (Ibn Majah).

Likewise, when Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was asked: "Who is the Best Muslim", he replied by saying:

"The best of you is he/her from whom good is anticipated and safety from his/her evil is assured; the worst of you is he/her from whom nothing good is expected and one is not safe from his/her evil." (Al Tirmidhi)

We hope and pray that attacks like these do not affect the good relationship Muslims have with other Faith-Communities in the United Kingdom and specifically in the London Borough of Lewisham.

Lastly, we express our heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims of the horrendous attack.

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