



RAINBOW CATHOLICS INTERAGENCY FOR MINISTRY



RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE DURING WORLD PRIDE – Time To Act!

As LGBTIQ+ Faith community leaders from the *Queer Christian Roundtable for World Pride*, we have been shocked by the events that occurred over *World Pride's* Opening weekend and during the annual *Sydney Mardi Gras* Festivities.

We abhor the religious abuse and intimidation directed intentionally towards *LGBTIQ+ people of faith* and our supportive communities and the physical attacks on our places of worship. The irresponsible and hateful behaviours of these groups and their supporters are hate crimes and have strengthened our resolve in confronting abuse and violence directed at *LGBTIQ+ folks*.

We reach out in prayer and support to *LGBTIQ+ faith community members and families* who have been traumatised and re-traumatised. If you have been affected, we ask you to approach organisations and churches of the *Queer Christian Roundtable* www.worldpridefaith.com.au directly to seek pastoral support, please also reach out to these organisations below for help and support:

QLife (*3pm-midnight everyday, Australia-wide anonymous, LGBTI peer support and referral*)
1800 184 527 <https://qlife.org.au/resources/chat>

LIFELINE (*For all ages*) **13 11 14**

KIDS HELPLINE (*For anyone 25 or under*) **1800 55 1800**

SUICIDE CALLBACK SERVICE (*If you're experiencing thoughts of self-harm or suicide*) **1300 659 467**

We want to assure our *LGBTIQ+ communities of faith*, especially those who have been affected by the events that we are working with the authorities to ensure safety for our communities.

LGBTIQ+ people of faith sadly continue to face physical, psychological and religious violence and threats of violence in Australia and around the world. We, together with our loved ones and allies, still face the threat of being discriminated against and marginalised in our own religious schools, places of worship and community spaces that are meant to be safe-spaces for us. This organisational violence is akin to patterns found in domestic and family violence situations, where the perpetrators of transphobic and homophobic abuse are rarely held to account.

Such deliberate breaches of safety and assaults on our liminal and often temporally safe spaces are cruel. They seek to intimidate, and silence our realities, stories, experiences, contributions, presence and voices.

Collectively, with little institutional support, we have therefore developed many initiatives, including a Thanksgiving Mass and a Faith@WorldPride Hub to give *LGBTIQ+ people of faith* and their loved ones safe spaces. These also provide sanctuary and safety for *LGBTIQ+ communities* and for all in the general community who wish to find religious spaces that are safe from transphobic, homophobic and queerphobic violence.

We implore civic and religious leaders to take a stance, to speak out against exclusions, discrimination, intimidation and violence directed towards *LGBTIQ+ people of faith*. These recent attacks should be a wake-up call. It is more than time to commit to actions, laws and policies that can end transphobia and homophobia in our religious and broader communities.

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