

Letter from Dean of American Cathedral in Paris

November 14, 2015

So many friends and colleagues have written in the last 18 hours expressing support, promising their prayers, and asking what they could do. I cannot tell you how incredibly important this has been to all of us at the American Cathedral. It is a very fearful time, and we are still bewildered and unsure. Knowing we have prayers coming from around the world, that we have a cloud of witnesses, and that we are so inextricably connected in the Body of Christ makes all the difference.

What can you do? First of all, I ask your prayers:

- for the victims, those who died and those wounded
- for their families
- for all those who have helped and are helping
- for all who protect us
- for the city of Paris, and especially our Cathedral community
- for all those whose anger, fear and hatred lead them to commit such acts
- for hope, for light in the darkness, and for peace

Secondly, I urge you to give some serious thought to next steps. Your expressions of support are strong and genuine – but where do they go? We have all held each other up before – after the Charlie Hebdo shootings, for instance, and after 9/11 – and shared a strong sense of unity. I'm not sure where I am going with this; I only mean that our prayers must lead us to action. Here in France I suspect there will be very, very strong anti-Muslim sentiment, and one thing we must do is stand with our Muslim brothers and sisters, and foster conversation and understanding. I think we also need to work harder to care for the flood of refugees fleeing terror in their own countries – work for immediate care and for political solutions. You will need to find your own mission in the US, but I know that it must involve continued dedication and commitment to making justice and making peace, and being a light in the darkness.

Thank you again, my brothers and sisters.

Lucinda Laird

Dean, The American Cathedral in Paris