June 1, 2016

We, national Catholic advocacy organizations, are very concerned about the hateful anti-Muslim rhetoric that is predictably spilling into further acts of violence around the United States. We hear from our Muslim sisters and brothers about how difficult it is to be an American Muslim today, and we lament the bigotry and Islamophobia coming from some politicians and commentators during the 2016 Presidential election cycle. The extent to which Muslims and others, who may appear to be Muslim, especially youth, have been demonized of late shows how far we still need to go as a society to realize our core value that each of us is created equal. We need to break our chronic pattern of de-humanizing groups of people.

Though fear of violent acts by criminal organizations worldwide is understandable, we must realize that Muslims are fearful, too. Many have had to flee their homes to keep their families safe from war and persecution, and here in the U.S. they are fearful of what those in places of privilege and power might say or do to them because of their religion.

We recognize that differences in race, religion and culture enrich, rather than endanger, our society. Now is the time for all Americans, especially people of faith, to speak out and build friendships with our Muslim neighbors. As Catholic Christians we acknowledge that the way of love, the Golden Rule, is integral to all major faith traditions and we witness to the truth that “love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18).

Catholic Alliance for the Common Good
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Faith in Public Life, Catholic Program
Franciscan Action Network
Ignatian Solidarity Network
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Pax Christi USA
Pax Christi International
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Institute Justice Team