

Word of Welcome.

Warm and heartfelt welcome to everyone to this Memorial Service. We are gathered in the Cathedral of Copenhagen to mourn the victims of the many recent terror attacks in many countries in the world. Hundreds of innocent people tragically and pointlessly lost their lives. Cruel and evil deeds by human beings that wish to see our societies dissolve.

But we will not only mourn the victims. We will also honor them. This we will do through expressing our solidarity with them and their relatives and through strengthening our fellowship with one another in music, lyrics and speeches here this afternoon.

Let us sing together: Angel of God's radiant light.

Sermon for Memorial service,  
Church of Our Lady  
April 6<sup>th</sup> 2016. 17 hours

*Matthew 10,29-31:*

*Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

It's comforting to listen to this word of Jesus that not the smallest bird - and much less a human being - falls to the ground and dies, without God taking part in it. He is close when

it happens, to ease the pain, to encourage and to give peace. - Therefore, Jesus can say: Fear not. For when he who has given us life, is with us during our lifetime, *and* when we leave this world, we can confidently rely on Him in all matters.

Many believe that this text means that it is of God's will, when someone dies. That everything in this manner is pre-determined by God. When even the smallest sparrow dies, God is in it - meaning, it happens according to His will. Many believe that such a blind faith in destiny is the same as believing in God.

But this is wrong. Life is not arranged. Death and destruction hits blindly and indiscriminately. But what God does for us is, when evil and tragic events make life unbearable, He comes to us to help us through it. God is the living source and force within us, above us, below us, who will enable us to live with all the evil and darkness in life. This is our basic comfort and our fundamental reason for fearing nothing.

Those who carry out acts of terrorism, killing innocent, women and children, do it with the sole purpose to create fear. Using the fear to paralyze the free and open societies, they wish to destroy. They shall have no success! Their cruel misdeeds call

on our courage to stand together and protect our open society by keeping them open. We would serve the purpose of the terrorists, if we react with fear, more security and more control.

Only by standing united across cultures, religions and national borders, we can resist the evil of terror. The right way to commemorate the tragic victims of terrorism and honor them is to insist on open communities, and to increase the degree of solidarity and mutual respect, esteem and charity. We must regard one another as members of one body: When one member suffers, the entire body is suffering. When one person dies because of a terrorist attack, the whole body, our whole community is affected. And we must respond by moving closer together, by helping and supporting each other. Include all parts of society. Invest in community work in our most fragile residential areas in order to remove or at least reduce the causes behind that some are being attracted to the kind of environments that create terrorists. We need to foster peace rather than wage war against violence. For violence leads to more violence.

The strongest weapon against the evil of terror is fearlessness, compassion, unity, solidarity, mutual love.

*“God is love,  
and whoever abides in love  
abides in God,  
and God abides in him.  
By this is love perfected with us,  
so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment,  
because as he is,  
so also are we in this world.  
There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.”  
(1. John 4,16-18)  
Amen.*