



October 13, 2023

Dear Diocese of San Diego Catholic School Families, and Staff:

As the conflict in Israel continues to escalate, we recognize there are growing concerns around safety in our schools and faith communities. As you may have heard in the media, a former Hamas chief called for a "Day of Jihad" around the world today, Friday, Oct. 13, along with other reported calls for a day of "general mobilization" and mass demonstrations. To be clear, the calls have been for global action; law enforcement is not aware of any calls for one in San Diego County.

The health and safety of our students remains our number one priority. Given the severity of the situation in Israel and the worldwide attention, law enforcement is encouraging a higher level of vigilance and situational awareness over the next few days. Our Office for Schools is in regular communication with county level law enforcement officials who will continue to monitor the local situation. In turn, we will be in communication with our school principals who will communicate any updates to you. We want to clarify once again, that as of now, law enforcement is not aware of any local threats; however, we are asking that everyone exercise vigilance and report suspicious or unusual behavior.

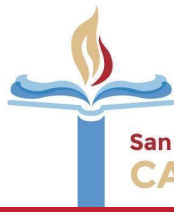
As most of you are aware, our schools have been participating in a Diamond Safety Training offered by the San Diego County Office of Education. Leaders in our K-8 Schools have completed three days of training and our high school teams have completed two full days of training as of now. The San Diego County Office of Education recently shared and continues to update resources for educators and families to discuss the events in Israel and Gaza with students. School principals are able to share appropriate resources with students and staff as they see necessary.

We will continue to monitor global events and local response, including maintaining contact with our local law enforcement partners and sharing safety updates with you. Thank you for partnering with us to keep our schools and students safe.

Finally, I want to close with a message from Cardinal McElroy regarding the conflict in the Middle East:

Statement from Cardinal Robert McElroy on the tragic conflicts raging in the Middle East.

"The heinous attack upon Israel by Hamas shocks the conscience of the Catholic community of San Diego and must be repudiated by all. We join in prayer with the people of Israel and our own Jewish community for the consolation of the victims and their families and the immediate release of the hostages.



As war escalates in the Middle East, we pray also for the civilian population of Gaza, which is suffering immensely from the siege being levied upon them. A second humanitarian disaster will only compound the cycle of violence that is the scourge of our world.

The Church in Jerusalem has asked Catholics around the world to pray next Tuesday that peace will return to the region where our Lord walked the earth and called upon us all to love one another. I ask our parishes and parishioners to remember this urgent priority in prayer on that day.

A prayer of intercession for this Sunday in our parishes:

That the Holy Land, which was the birthplace of the Prince of Peace and is now consumed by violence and retribution, may receive the overwhelming grace and consolation of God which leads to lasting justice and love across every divide, let us pray to the Lord..."

Yours in Christ,

Ms. Leticia Oseguera
Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of San Diego