

March 19, 2013

His Holiness Pope Francis

Your Holiness,

We are writing to convey our genuine and heartfelt congratulations on your recent elevation to the position of Pope, Vicar of Christ and Bishop of Rome of the Catholic Church. We offer our prayers and supplications before God that the Almighty may bestow upon you His blessings and sustenance as you take on your role in leading your much loved and respected worldwide community and as you contribute, with the guidance and resources given to you, to the well-being and upliftment of humanity.

As Canada's most representative interfaith organization, we look forward, as your Church sees fit and as appropriate, to collaborating with those of your believers in Canada with whom we might be so fortunate to engage as partners and friends as we pursue our national interfaith conversation, our projects and our initiatives.

Our national interfaith organization was first formed when, led by the Canadian Council of Churches, it organized the G8 Religious Leaders Summit in 2010 held on the campus of the University of Winnipeg, a week prior to the G8/G20 meetings in Ontario. Over 80 senior religious leaders from around the world met and issued a joint statement received personally at the Summit by Federal Minister Stephen Fletcher on behalf of the Government of Canada. Since 2010 we have continued to meet in order to preserve and extend what we feel is a particularly Canadian way of exercising religious harmony and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

Executive Committee of the Canadian Interfaith Conversation

Gerald Filson, Director Public Affairs, Baha'i Community of Canada

Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton, General Secretary, Canadian Council of Churches

Zul Kassamali, Vice President, Association of Progressive Muslims of Canada, and President,  
Toronto Area Interfaith Council

Aileen Van Ginkel, Vice-President, Ministry Services, The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

cc. Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops