



November 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

We request that you read this letter to your congregation during your service on 27 November 2016

We greet you in the name of our risen Saviour, whose death and resurrection brought us back to the presence of the creator God, and in whose image both men and women are made.

This Sunday, 27 November 2016, we are marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which is commemorated globally on 25 November. This day highlights the suffering that many women around the world face, at home, at work, in the streets and in Church.

Violence against women takes many forms. For some women, it is sexual or physical violence. For others it is when they have money taken away from them, or not being provided with sufficient money for family needs. For others, they are stopped from seeing their family or friends. But for all, it is when they are afraid of the consequences of what will happen if they do not obey.

This letter, from the leaders of several denominations and read out today in many of the Churches in Kolkata, is to recognise that there are women in our congregations who are suffering violence.

Women must be treated in a way which imitates the love that Christ has for all of us. We want to categorically say that violence against women is incompatible with the teaching of Jesus and is incompatible with the life of a disciple of Christ. Violence against women is sin and destroys the relationship God intends between men and women.

Violence is unacceptable and, if you are suffering violence, then it is not your fault. You have done nothing to bring this upon yourself. The person abusing you is choosing to do so, against the wishes of God and they are the ones sinning.

Over the coming few years, we commit ourselves to work for our families to be safe spaces for women, a place where they can experience Godly relationships, safe from violence.

Yours in Christ

Rt. Rev. Ashoke Biswas
Bishop of Calcutta
Church of North India

Rev. Dr Ivan Satyavrata
Senior Pastor
Assembly of God Church

Pastor Asis Sarkar
President
Bengal Baptist Union