



SPEECH

Protestant Church – Museum (Royal Chapel)

We Anglicans are grateful for the welcome we have always received in Belgium. English links with this country stretch back to trade in the Middle Ages, and we played a role in the creation of the Kingdom of Belgium in 1831. 161,000 British servicemen of the First World War and 8,600 British servicemen of the Second World War are buried in Belgian soil, men who gave their lives for Belgium's freedom. We love this land and in our 12 parishes we pray for it every day.

In the past, the Anglican Church has not been free of violence, and in particular we committed acts of violence and repression against Catholics in England. But that is the past. Since the great battles led by Anglicans to abolish slavery in the British Empire, which finally bore fruit in 1833, we have tried to follow a path of peace, brotherhood and tolerance, in the name of Jesus Christ whom we serve.

We commit ourselves today to work for peace and brotherhood with our brothers and sisters who are Christians of other traditions, with our brothers and sisters who are Jews and Muslims, with those of all and none, to build a Belgium which will continue to welcome minorities like ourselves. We will never tire of working with you for peace in our beautiful land.

Thank you and God bless you.

Mgr Robert Innes, the Anglican Bishop in Europe