

Expression of Condolence for Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu by Toronto City Council

Moved by: Mayor John Tory

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu on December 26, 2021 at the age of 90.

Archbishop Tutu was a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, and he was known as a symbol of freedom for his work as an anti-apartheid and human rights activist.

Archbishop Tutu started his career as a teacher after earning his bachelor's degree from the University of South Africa. He received his Master's Degree in theology and was ordained an Anglican priest in 1960.

As the first Black General Secretary of South African Council of Churches, Archbishop Tutu was the voice and major force against apartheid in South Africa. Though Archbishop Tutu himself suffered from hardship and indignities of apartheid, he never allowed hate to control his optimism. As a man of forgiveness, he advocated for justice, love and compassion and he was credited for coining the phrase "rainbow nation" to describe post-apartheid South Africa. In 1995, Nelson Mandela appointed him as head of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa to investigate human rights abuse.

Though he had retreated from public, due to illness, he and his work were never forgotten. In 2009, Archbishop Tutu was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

When the pandemic hit the world, he played a crucial role towards recovery by inviting people to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

The City Clerk is asked to convey, on behalf of Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu's wife Nomalizo Leah, his children and his friends and colleagues. The world will miss this icon who provided inspiration and hope to all.

February 2, 2022