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Father John Dickson
RC Chaplain

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Dear Trustees of the Runnymede Muslim Society

I am delighted to express my unhesitating support for your project to create a Muslim Community Centre,(Masjid) in Runnymede. Having a stable base in the Runnymede will allow you to develop your own community and your outreach in charity to the wider local community.

Over the last 10 years, since I came to Royal Holloway University, I have been privileged to have been blessed by the unfailing kindness, support and friendship of the Muslim Community.

As a regular visitor to their weekly prayer services and I have been inspired by the reverence and depth of prayer and reflection that I have witnessed and on the openness and wisdom of many of the sermons that I have heard and by the welcome I have received,

During Ramadan the Muslim community have been happy offer food and hospitality to University students who are keeping the fast and happy to explain it to others.

Every year speakers from the Society have come to share their understanding and experience of the tradition of prayer, fasting and almsgiving that are at the heart of the Holy Month of Ramadan, with groups of Catholic Students at the university and helped to develop our inter-faith understanding.

On a number of occasions members of the Society have been kind enough to give our annual Chaplaincy Lecture and have been regular attendees at these significant moments of the public face Multi-Faith Chaplaincy of the university.

I have been delighted to attend their local open days when they offer to de-mystify Islam and explain to the wider community the significance of their beliefs and religious practice.

At our Annual University Christmas Carole Service, they have willingly read a passage from the Holy Quran, emphasising the wider significance of the season of peace and goodwill for all humanity and especially all believers. On one memorable occasion, when one of the congregation took seriously ill at the end of the service, it was one of the Muslim Community that helped me to care for the person till the paramedics arrived.

I have been delighted that members of the Society have shared a prayer on a number of personally significant moments such as: my official induction as Catholic Chaplain, my 40th anniversary of ordination and I have been privileged to share their Golden Wedding celebration too.

I have no hesitation in expressing my complete support for this development.

Fr John Dickson SDB, MA (Oxon), PhD, NPQH, NLG.