uel murder" of British aid worker David Haines and called on churches

Archbishop Justin posted a message on Twitter early this morning calling on "every church...[to] pray for the family of David Haines" who had been "evilly killed in the place he was serving in love for its suffering people".

Speaking to BBC News in Bristol, where he is on a diocesan visit, Archbishop Justin said: "What we have seen in this dreadful video is an act of absolute evil, unqualified, without any light in it at all. There is a sense that within this area, and in many places in the world where this kind of thing is being done, that the darkness is deepening. It's being done in the name of faith, but we've heard already today faith leaders from Islam across the world condemning this.

"What's going on is a power-seeking activity. Faith is often used as a hook on which to hang other desires, and this is a desire for power and influence, and faith is being twisted to enable it to be used to gain power and influence for their own unspeakably evil ends. So today there is that sick sense of horror at the wickedness we see, a deep sense of compassion for the family, and prayer that they may be comforted by the presence and light of Christ in a very, very dark time indeed."

In a sermon preached at Bristol Cathedral, the Archbishop said: "We are living through a time when it seems that daily the darkness deepens, the shadows fall, the weight of human evil seems to grow and even those who stand up for what is good find themselves assailed on every side.

"All of us today will have heard this morning of the brutal, cruel murder of David Haines. He was in the Middle East on humanitarian work, he had gone to serve the people of Syria and Iraq, and his captors captured him, held him, toyed with the hopes of freedom, and then killed him.

"And so where is Christ in that? On Holy Cross Day we are reminded above all that he is with David Haines, that he is in the depths of evil and the depths of our own suffering because of the cross."

2 min read