



THE ARCHBISHOP
OF CANTERBURY



atrocities in northern Iraq

During the interview the Archbishop said there is "a sense of near despair at the fact that we've got to this point, and a longing to be able to do something because that's always our instinct".

He added: "I was noting this morning when I was praying about that sense of helplessness and looking at one of the Psalms speaking about, the Psalmist saying to God: 'Where are you? What are you doing?'"

The Archbishop repeated his backing for the call made by three CofE bishops last week for the Government to offer refuge to Iraqi Christians.

"France, as we know, has opened its doors, and I think that is something we could do, we have the resources to do. It's a humanitarian thing, to recognise people in the extremes of despair and helplessness and to provide a beacon of hope. We've done that throughout our history; it's a good thing if we go on doing it," he said.

Asked if he had concerns about the possible implications of the Iraq crisis for Christian-Muslim relations around the world, the Archbishop said he was concerned but stressed that Muslim leaders throughout the United Kingdom have been condemning the atrocities in northern Iraq.

"This is an incredibly complex conflict, and it is a particular group that is carrying out the attacks that many Muslim leaders deny has any real theological validity. I mean, the great trial and challenge to Christians is Jesus saying to us 'forgive your enemies, love your enemies.' That may not solve problems, but in the end it changes the world. It may not be a quick fix, but it is the right thing in the end.

"Clearly ISIS, IS, are an enemy. How do we deal with them? It's very, very hard to say. But what we mustn't do in blanket terms is condemn all Muslims as though they were all members of this group, because very, very clearly the overwhelming, enormous majority of them have no sympathy with what is going on at all."

[Listen to the full interview on the Radio 4 website](#) (starts at 32min 42secs).

Read more

[Archbishop Justin Welby's statement on Iraq](#) (Friday 8 August).

2 min read

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