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Chief Rabbis in wake of COVID-19: Keep this Shabbat

Unprecedented joint call from Chief Rabbis of the world for Jewry to unite this Shabbat as a spiritual response to the coronavirus

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Shabbat

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Chief Rabbis from across the globe have today called for world Jewry to unite and keep this Shabbat to support one another and pray for each other's welfare.

#KeepingItTogether is a call to unite the Jewish community worldwide in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions that have been brought in to protect everyone's welfare. The united call is from the Chief Rabbis of Israel, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, Argentina, South Africa, Moscow, Rome, Brussels, as well as the Conference of European Rabbis.



In a signed letter, the coalition of Jewish leaders urges the global Jewish community to use Shabbat Hagadol – the “Great Shabbat” immediately before Pesach – as an opportunity to tap into the transformative power of Shabbat and to unite in the face of the current crisis.

The Chief Rabbis are calling on Jews in every corner of the globe to:

1. Call or message each other with words of support before Shabbat;
2. Pray for each other, and all humankind just before candle-lighting;
3. Keep this Shabbat together.

Each of these three actions is intended to have a far-reaching impact and to connect the global Jewish community, whilst at the same time, calling on world Jewry to uphold the vital social distancing measures set out by world governments and health authorities.

Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein of South Africa said: “The unprecedented nature of the crisis that COVID-19 has caused requires an unprecedented show of unity. This is the first-time that





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there has been a joint call of Chief Rabbis on this level, united in our message for world Jewry to come together in support of one another. We urge organisations all over the world to work together so that we can emerge from this incredibly challenging time stronger than ever. This alliance of Chief Rabbis will going forward continue to work together in partnership to make the world into a better place.”

Chief Rabbi Riccardo Di-Segni of Rome said: “Over the last few weeks we have witnessed first-hand the devastation that COVID-19 can cause. In Italy, our community is mourning and many people have been unwell, we must support each other to find a way through this crisis. I would urge every Jew to support their community and take this opportunity to reach out and show solidarity to one another. We are blessed to have Shabbat and the more special we can make it for ourselves and our households the more strength we will get from it to fight this virus.”

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