



The Sunday Times



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Comment from Archbishop Tim Costelloe SDB regarding the non-denominational prayer room at Perth's new Children's Hospital

Speaking to the Sunday Times newspaper, the Most Rev Tim Costelloe SDB, Catholic Archbishop of Perth, has commented on the proposed non-denominational prayer room at Perth's Children Hospital as follows:

“The Perth Children’s Hospital will serve people from many religions and none. Everyone will be at a very different stage on their faith journey. Some are likely to be wrestling with who God is while their child is in hospital, and even with God’s existence.

“From a Catholic perspective, wherever possible the Church looks to bring about unity, firstly among Christian believers. It also seeks ongoing dialogue with other faiths and religions. To have a shared prayer space that is not linked to any particular church or denomination may in fact be no bad thing. It is more important for us as Catholics that adequate provision is made for the work of Catholic chaplains in the hospital.

“However, it is vital that any prayer space be a place that soothes, calms and invites silence, reflection or at times expressions of immense joy or deep grief. For those who are believers in God it will need to be a space that can provide for the full expression of their beliefs.

“Ideally a common prayer space will be designed in such a way that the various religious traditions can adapt it to their own particular needs as and when the occasion will warrant it. To simply provide an empty room which has no real beauty, comfort or dignity to it, and no flexibility, would not respect the needs of people at what will often be difficult and lonely times for them in a hospital setting.”