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Boston mosque: 'We're Bostonians -- we mourn with the city'

by Tom Gallagher

NCR Today

It was surprising that the Catholic News Service story on the Boston Marathon bombing specifically mentioned the reactions by Protestant, Catholic and Jewish groups but left out specific reference to the Muslims.

Here's how CNS reported: "Around the region, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and interfaith organizations scheduled prayer services and vigils for the days after the bombings."

Meanwhile, Muslims in Boston's main mosque offered the services of some 40 doctors who attend religious services at the mosque and reached out to organize prayer services.

The Huffington Post has a more complete picture on how Muslims reacted to the horrific event in Boston:

Security officials at Boston's largest mosque requested police to guard its campus in the wake of Monday's deadly explosions at the Boston Marathon, a sobering reminder that Muslims in the U.S. often face threats after alleged terrorist attacks.

But if the pair of city police officers parked outside the mosque conveyed a message of heightened alert, workers inside the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center were too busy to notice. There, a small staff spent Tuesday morning working with religious leaders from various faiths across the city to launch an interfaith prayer event to memorialize the attack's victims, while offering city and state officials all the resources the mosque could muster.

"We're Bostonians -- we mourn with the city," said Suhaib Webb, the Oklahoma-born imam who leads

the congregation. "We stand in support with the city, with the victims. We're hurt, equally shocked and equally pissed off."

The relationship that a Muslim community has with the city it inhabits can often be tested in the aftermath of acts of terror. But in the immediate aftermath of the Boston Marathon attacks, the prevailing sentiment inside this mosque was of shared grief rather than instinctive distrust.

The mosque volunteered to city officials the services of the roughly 40 doctors who attend its religious services. The campus itself was volunteered to serve as a disaster relief center. And Webb, who was out of town when the attack took place, offered via Twitter his home to any marathon runner that needed shelter.

"This is Boston's mosque," Webb said.

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