




DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Memo

To: Clergy
From: Auxiliary Bishop Myron J. Cotta 
Date: July 31, 2014
Re: **Praying for Peace**

As we welcome the new month of August, and anticipate the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, let us turn to her most powerful intercession in regard to praying for peace. Please encourage some special time of prayer, individually, as a family and as a parish, especially, for peace and the end of violence in the Middle East and the persecution of the Church in Iraq & Syria. As the Chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace, Bishop Richard Pates, Bishop of Des Moines stated: “The situation in Iraq has only deteriorated in the past month. The Islamic State has taken control of large swaths of territory in northern Iraq, leaving a trail of destruction, burning and looting ancient churches and mosques, homes and businesses. ISIS issued an ultimatum to Christians and others who do not convert to their extremist brand of Islam or pay a tax, threatening their lives. Thousands have fled with little more than the clothes on their backs, often being robbed of their few personal possessions as they ran.”

In a letter to the U.S. Bishops, Archbishop Kurtz, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, stated: “Our Holy Father, Pope Francis prayed for peace in all situations of tension and conflict in the world. He mentioned in particular the Middle East and Ukraine, singling out the terrible crisis of Christians in Iraq with these words: “Today our brothers are persecuted. They are banished from their homes and forced to flee without even being able to take their belongings!”

As we take all this to heart, I ask that you and your parishioners set aside a time for special prayer for these intentions.

You might consider encouraging individuals, families, prayer groups, youth groups, etc. to schedule a special time for the recitation of the Rosary. For this intention for peace, you might offer a time to have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; to consider offering acts of penance in reparation for conversion; to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy; or invite them to consider fasting (traditionally – Weds. & Fri.) You might acknowledge August 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption, as a special day for the parish to pray for peace.

Let Our Lady’s words, spoken at Fatima almost a hundred years ago, re-echo more than ever in these perilous times of our day and age: “Continue to pray the Rosary everyday”. Let us take to heart the invitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, “the Star of the New Evangelization,” to pray the Rosary for peace in our world as the terrible conflict between Israel and Hamas, and all of the other regions of the world cry out for peace and justice.

Our Lady of the Rosary and Queen of Peace, pray for us.