

January 4, 2002

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

As the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and all that has followed from them continue to weigh upon the hearts and minds of our nation and our world, our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, has issued a special call to prayer, inviting leaders of all the major world religions to join him in Assisi, Italy, on January 24, 2002, for a day of prayer for an end to all hostilities throughout the world and the advancement of true and lasting peace among the family of nations.

While most of us cannot join them physically, we can, indeed, be in solidarity with this great and historic gathering for peace by our own commitment to set aside some time for personal and/or communal prayer on January 24. I am hosting an inter-religious prayer service with local leaders of major religious faith communities and leadership from the business and civic communities at SS. Peter and Paul Church (downtown) on January 24 at 12 noon. Please know that you are warmly and enthusiastically invited to participate in this one-hour service during which we, the leaders, will all be signing a common commitment to work for peace.

I have asked our pastors to consider holding a special prayer service or liturgy praying for world peace in conjunction with the January 24 gathering. In some parts of the Archdiocese, these may even be interfaith or ecumenical prayer services for this same cause. In whatever way possible, I encourage you to participate in one of these gatherings or at least to take some time for private prayer and/or some act of penance such as fasting and/or almsgiving in solidarity with our Holy Father's initiative and request.

In and through our prayer, there rests an untold power for good. In the past decade, fervent and faithful prayer brought down Communism. Our prayer, together with all people of good will, can truly help accomplish the coming of Christ's reign of truth, justice, and peace. As we remember the 29th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, and as we celebrate a national holiday in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., let us commit ourselves to work and pray for a greater defense of the dignity of every human life from the first moment of conception until last natural breath, and let us pledge our energies and talents to promote a world where the lives of all people will be treasured regardless of race, religion, or ethnic origin.

Through the intercession of Our Lady Queen of Peace, let us work and pray for peace throughout the world!

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Adam Cardinal Maida
Archbishop of Detroit