

News Advisory

To: News Editors and Assignment Desks
From: Ned McGrath (w) 313-237-5943 / (h) 313-886-4114
Date: Friday, December 14, 2001

**RE: Cardinal Maida to Visit Islamic Center
in Response to Papal Call to Fast and Pray**

Detroit Archbishop Cardinal Adam Maida, the spiritual leader of 1.4 million Catholics in the Archdiocese of Detroit, will visit the Islamic Center of America, 15571 Joy Road, Detroit, on Friday, December 14, at 12 noon.

Cardinal Maida will meet privately with Imam Hassan Qazwini and then enter the sanctuary of the mosque to address the congregation in conjunction with the Juma'a Prayer, the weekly gathering of Muslims.

In November, Pope John Paul II called upon Catholics worldwide to fast and pray on December 14 in solidarity with those "suffering the consequences of terrorism and war."

Fasting is part of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim religions and gives greater intensity to prayer. In a world that has changed dramatically since September 11, the December 14 date was chosen because it coincides with the closing day of Ramadan, the month-long period of intense prayer and fasting by the Muslim people.

On December 6, in an open letter to the priests and people of the Archdiocese of Detroit, Cardinal Maida urged local Catholics to heed the Pope's call to pray and fast on December 14 and suggested giving alms to some charitable outreach effort. More information can be found on the Archdiocese of Detroit web site at www.archdioceseofdetroit.org.

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NOTE: The Islamic Center of America is located at 15571 Joy Road, west of Greenfield, on the south side of Joy, in Detroit. The press is invited to meet with Imam Qazwini, Cardinal Maida, and Father John West, ecumenical and interfaith advisor for the Archdiocese of Detroit, from 12 to 12:15 p.m. The Cardinal and the Imam will hold a private meeting from 12:15 to 12:30 p.m.. At 12:30 p.m., they will enter the sanctuary of the mosque and Cardinal Maida will deliver his address to the congregation.

Reporters will be allowed inside the sanctuary. Videotaping and flash photography will be permitted. You are asked not to take any pictures of women praying and all women are asked to wear a scarf on their heads. Everyone will be asked to remove his or her shoes when entering the sanctuary. For more information, contact Eide (pronounced Ee-d) Alawan at 313-506-3353.