

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
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ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL
INTERFAITH DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND PRAYER CARAVAN
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My dear boys and girls of Detroit:

It is 8:49 a.m., and we gather to remember all that happened last year on this date, September eleventh. Let us be silent for just a moment, and realize that God is with us this morning in this holy place, on this holy ground. *(a silence of thirty seconds)*

I am honored to be with you today in the company of so many religious leaders from all across our metropolitan area who have journeyed here together in a prayer caravan symbolic of the pilgrimage of faith we must make today and all the days of our lives. I am Adam Cardinal Maida, the Catholic Archbishop of Detroit, and I join you in thanking Bishop Wendell Gibbs for offering us hospitality here at his Cathedral Church of St. Paul. We have come here to be with you, the children of the Herlong Cathedral School, who pray every Wednesday morning. Obviously, this is a very special day, a day of remembrance of all the people who perished at the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington DC, and in a field in western Pennsylvania.

First anniversaries are always very important and significant in our lives. When someone near and dear to us dies, we feel the emptiness of their absence. On the first anniversary of September eleventh, we remember the 3,043 persons killed and we also remember the brave heroes who gave their lives in trying to save them. We also pray with and for their family members and friends who mourn their loss.

Instead of watching television this morning, we are praying with each other to God. The faith leaders gathered here will soon continue our journey, traveling to the Hillel Day School in West Bloomfield to meet and pray with the children of the Jewish faith, and then we will go to the school at the Islamic Center for America in Dearborn to be with the children of the Muslim faith. With children and adults of all faiths all across the Detroit area, America, and indeed all around the world, we ask God's guidance and protection, inspiration and hope, so that we will be able to forgive those who did these things and learn how to live better lives by being open and concerned about people of all religious and racial and ethnic backgrounds.

We also ask God to help the families of the victims and the heroic public servants who still mourn their loved ones; may God touch their hearts and give them comfort.

We also ask God to touch our hearts as well and convince us that we are called to be people of prayer, committed to peace and justice. We pray with and for all who continue to suffer because of 9-11. Even as we pray and ask for God's help, we have a responsibility to be compassionate peacemakers and justice seekers in our daily lives.

Dear children, I know that your parents and teachers remind you everyday to resolve your conflicts and your differences in a peaceful way. By seeking the way of peace together, children and adults can build a more just and loving society. Today's prayer and reflection must blossom forth into responsible and loving action that leaves aside all hatred, revenge, and violence.

Dear young people, on this September eleventh, we look to you to lead us. You will proclaim the Scriptures and you will lead us in our reflection, in simplicity and silence, so that we will assure God and one another today that we can plant the seeds of peace together.

As Noah in the ark sent forth two doves in search of a renewed earth, at the end of our service today at the doors of this beautiful cathedral, we will release two doves as a sign that all of us are seeking to find a new world that will provide more opportunities for just and loving relationships with each other.

Just think of it, people passing by on the street, or people working in office towers will see these doves that we will release this morning, and they will join us

in prayer. One with Noah of old, and with all the children of today, we seek to replace hatred with love. One with your religious leaders today, dear children, we give united witness to God's message that love is stronger than anger or violence. Like the mourning doves that we are soon to release, may we ourselves become ambassadors of reconciliation, carrying a message of renewed hope to everyone we meet.

Thank you for inviting us to your prayer service this morning, boys and girls and teachers. Thank you also to the religious leaders present here today: we have come together often in this past year to remind each other of the powerful message we must consistently preach to our people. In the face of terror and fear, we must always be partners in faith, hope, and love, praying, dialoguing and seeking enlightened action together to turn the tide of evil into rivers of peace. May God bless you now and always.