

December 6, 2001

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, has asked that December 14, 2001, be set aside as a day of special prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, a day of solidarity *with* and *for* all those suffering the effects of terrorism and war. Obviously, our Holy Father is focusing on the terrorist attacks of September 11 and the conflict in Afghanistan, and yet, as we know, terrorism, violence, and armed conflict have been going on for centuries and continue to breakout throughout the world.

I have asked our priests to schedule a special prayer service or liturgy on December 14, focusing on this theme. I ask each of you to take seriously our Holy Father's call to pray and fast. If possible, you may also want to give alms for some charitable outreach effort; I encourage you to give to our Raphael Fund for relief for those suffering from the terrorist attacks earlier this fall. You may also want to be generous toward those suffering from the war in Afghanistan by contributing to Catholic Relief Services.

Our Holy Father chose December 14 for this purpose precisely because it is the conclusion of Ramadan, the month-long period of intense prayer and fasting by the Muslim people. In solidarity with our Muslim brothers and sisters near and far, and in communion with our Jewish brothers and sisters and with fellow Christians and all people of goodwill, let us pray for peace, especially as we prepare to celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Peace in just a few days.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Adam Cardinal Maida
Archbishop of Detroit