



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

October 20, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Pope Francis announced after his Papal Audience on October 18 that he is calling for a day of fasting and prayer to be observed on Friday, October 27, as the Church prays for peace in the midst of the sorrows of war and violence in the Holy Land at the present time. In response to the Holy Father's call, I ask that our diocese join in this day of fasting and prayer.

As October 27 falls on a Friday, I ask all to recall our custom of not eating meat or anything containing meat products. This custom of ours recalls that Jesus, the Lamb of God, took upon Himself the sins of all humanity as He was sacrificed on the Cross on Good Friday. We pray as we spend such a day of remembrance, "We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world." We observe this day as one of holy union with Jesus as members of His Body, the Church.

I ask that as far as it is possible, that we do not eat in between meals on that Friday of fasting and prayer and, in so doing, recall the dire sufferings of all the victims of the violence and war now raging in Israel and Gaza, especially the Jewish people who were murdered or taken hostage and the Palestinian people whose food and water and any comforts are denied them. It is always the innocent who suffer as a result of the consequences of the atrocities of war.

In between meals as we fast, I ask that you join me through our Cathedral Livestream www.stjosephcathedralnh.org at 12 pm on October 27 as we pray the Rosary and meditate on the Five Sorrowful Mysteries: The Agony in the Garden, The Scourging at the Pillar, The Crowning With Thorns, The Carrying of the Cross and The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus. As we pray, we might well imagine the sufferings of the present in light of and in union with Jesus Who suffered and died for humanity's sake.

The Diocese of Manchester is sending monetary support as well to assist those who are suffering overseas and to underpin our diocesan day of prayer and fasting with an offering of mercy for those affected by this tragedy.

I thank you in advance for uniting in our common call to help alleviate suffering and the scourge of war as we pray and hope for peace.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci, D.D.
Bishop of Manchester