



AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

ANCC Presiding Bishop's Plea for Peace between the United States and Iran

8 January 2020
Wednesday after Epiphany

In the name + of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

It's sorrowful that in this season of Christmas, a time in which Christians around the world joyfully celebrate the Nativity of the Prince of Peace, simmering hostilities between the United States and Iran erupted in violence: the White House-sanctioned assassination of an Iranian general and Iran's retaliatory missile strike against two U.S. air bases.

For now, at least, the immediate threat of armed escalation has been put on hold. But the United States and Iran—and, for that matter, the entire world—were taken to the brink of all-out war by this latest clash. Regrettably, given the unabatedly hostile relationship between Washington and Teheran, war remains a real possibility.

St. John XXIII's 1963 encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*) was written just months after the Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world to the very edge of war. In it, St. John urged the world's political leaders to abandon strongarm tactics and saber-rattling for the gentler and ultimately more fruitful tasks of diplomacy and international cooperation. He wrote:

May God enlighten the rulers of peoples so that in addition to their solicitude for the proper welfare of their citizens, they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace; may He enkindle the wills of all, so that they may overcome the barriers that divide, cherish the bonds of mutual charity, understand others, and pardon those who have done them wrong; by virtue of his action, may all peoples of the earth become as brothers, and may the most longed-for peace blossom forth and reign always among them.

It is my fervent prayer that Mr. Trump and the leaders of Iran, as well as the peoples of both our nations, "overcome the barriers that divide" by sincerely seeking a peaceful means of resolving differences. I join with all persons of good will in urging representatives from both sides to meet immediately to end the half-century of hostility that has led us to the frightening brink upon which we now stand.

May we honor the Prince of Peace by building harmony between our nations.

The Most Reverend George R. Lucey, FCM
Presiding Bishop