



## AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

October 11, 2023  
The Feast of St. John XXIII

The American National Catholic Church (ANCC) joins her voice with all people of good will in expressing their sorrow at the tragedies occurring in the Middle East as a result of recent senseless violence.

St. John XXIII's first encyclical entitled *Pacem in Terris* ("Peace on Earth") first promulgated in 1963 is a reminder and call to all of us to never cease to work for: "Peace on Earth—which man throughout the ages has so longed for and sought after—can never be established, never guaranteed, except by the diligent observance of the divinely established order." (*Pacem*, 1ff.)

And so today we are reminded once more of our responsibilities and rights—and obligations-- as organized societies to guard and respect the dignity and equality of all peoples, the most basic right being that to live in a safe and peaceful society.

The American National Catholic Church joins the mission of all Christian communities to be peacemakers in the world and to support local and global efforts to promote peace.

Jesus calls all of us to be "peacemakers" - they, after all, are to be known as those closest to God's heart.

Devout Christians, Jews, and Muslims all believe in the power of prayer, and, for persons of faith, this must be the first course of action. As Presiding Bishop of the ANCC, I shall be directing each of our member parishes to celebrate a Vigil Mass for peace in this troubled region, as well as to join in worship and prayer with those of other faiths who seek a peaceful outcome to the current hostilities.

It is a true saying that "violence breeds violence," but it is often difficult to know from where the courage will come to break the cycle and restore God's peace. I ask you— whoever and wherever you are—to join us in collective prayers for peace. May God bless us all.