



Office of the Bishop

Diocese of Brooklyn

310 Prospect Park West
Brooklyn, New York 11215

MEMORANDUM

To: All Priests
From: Bishop Robert Brennan
Date: October 20, 2023
Re: Day of Prayer for Peace - October 27, 2023
Mass and Holy Hour at St. James Cathedral Basilica

Catholics in Brooklyn and Queens are united in solidarity with our Jewish friends and neighbors in the New York City who are concerned about family in Israel. We pray for all who are suffering, for those injured and especially for all those who died as a result of the terror attacks perpetrated by Hamas.

We abhor these assaults on innocent life and the taking of men, women and children as hostages. The political realities of the Middle East are very complicated. However, we plead for the safety of all innocent persons, both Israelis and Palestinians.

These recent developments have provoked anti-Semitic rhetoric here in New York and even violence throughout the world. The Catholic Church condemns such actions and words. In 1965, the Second Vatican Council issued *Nostra Aetate*, the declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions. Part of this document states that the “Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel’s spiritual love decries hatred, persecutions, and displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.” We must echo these words today more than ever.

As I indicated to the pastors in an email message yesterday, Pope Francis has invited us to participate in a day of prayer, fasting and penance for peace next Friday, October 27, 2023. ([Pope: 'May weapons fall silent, situation in Gaza is desperate' - Vatican News](#))

On that day, I will preside at a Holy Hour at St. James Cathedral Basilica at 11:00 AM and celebrate the Noon Mass there. We will be united spiritually with our Holy Father, who will pray in St. Peter’s Square at that very hour. NET TV will broadcast the Holy Hour and the Mass followed by the Holy Father’s Prayer, but I welcome all wish to join us in person at St. James.

I ask you please to share this information with your parishioners this weekend and to offer opportunities for prayer in your own parishes. The Mass texts “In Time of War or Civil Disturbance” (#31 from the *Roman Missal*, Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions) are appropriate for this day. You might also consider organizing Holy Hours and/or Rosaries for Peace or highlighting already-scheduled times for Adoration.

Thank you for your prayers and assistance,
Bishop Brennan