



Wednesday, February 25, 2014

Dear Friends in Christ,

I write to you today to request your prayers and support for the victims of the current humanitarian crisis in northern Iraq. Sectarian violence has left hundreds of thousands homeless and without basic human necessities. Therefore, I would ask you to join me in responding to Pope Francis' call for prayers and support of our suffering sisters and brothers in Iraq by participating in one or more of the following:

- Attend the [interreligious and ecumenical prayer service](#) on Sunday, August 24 at 2 p.m. at the Baltimore Basilica;
- Observe the day of [prayer and fasting on Saturday, August 23](#);
- Pray for Iraq's persecuted Christians during the offering of the universal prayers at all Masses the weekend of August 16-17;
- Consider a donation to [Catholic Relief Services](#), which expects to provide food, water, education, counseling, and re-settlement assistance to 30,000 families in Iraq over the next six months.

I hope that you are able to join us for the prayer service and/or to assist the people of Iraq in one or more of the aforementioned ways. Thank you for joining us in praying for peace in Iraq in the words of Pope Francis: "May the God of peace create in all an authentic desire for dialogue and reconciliation. Violence is not conquered with violence. Violence is conquered with peace. Let us pray in silence, asking for peace."

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend William E. Lori  
Archbishop of Baltimore



