



Association of Pittsburgh Priests

□ Box 2106 ♦ Pittsburgh, PA 15230

March 9, 2025

Dear Pastors, Associates, and Faithful,

On Saturday, February 28, the United States began the war with Iran with a massive air assault. Ironically, that same day, Saturday of the First Week of Lent, the Gospel proclaimed Jesus' teaching of "love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5: 43-48).

On moral grounds, the Association of Pittsburgh endorses the statements of Pope Leo XIV the following day and of Pax Christi USA. Is the decision for war one that Jesus would make? Does it meet our basic moral principle that evil means cannot be justified even for a good end? Does it meet the criteria of our Just War tradition? Was it declared by a proper authority (Constitutionally without Congressional approval)? Was it the last resort?

With hindsight from our last Gulf War, this war is immoral, illegal, and so tragic. It can spiral easily into the worst consequences imaginable – for the US and for the world. And we mourn the destruction of human life (including women and children, born and unborn), the further devastation to the Middle East which will ripple around the world, and the shaking of the fragile world order.

We enclose **Pax Christi USA's statement**. It references Pope Leo's concerns as well as those of other Church leaders. The Maryknoll resource at the bottom of that page has good ideas for prayer. Another powerful resource is our recent speaker, Alan Storey. This preacher and retreat master held our Zoom audience speechless with his calm, powerful, Biblically based assessment of our fractured world, its leaders, and the Iran War. Now it is available on the APP website Home page: www.associationofpittsburghpriests.com.

Whether you agree with our perspective or not, we together follow the nonviolent Jesus.

We all can agree with Pope Leo's concerns to bring this dangerous war to the quickest conclusion possible and to be in solidarity with its victims, especially non-combatants. Won't you join us in mobilizing Catholics of Pittsburgh and beyond to respond compassionately:

- through prayer personally and in our parish worship, including references to the suffering on both sides in homilies and in the Prayers of the Faithful,
- through fasting and other personal efforts to end the war like contacting your legislators or protesting,
- through trying to follow in our personal interactions Jesus's call to nonviolence – in all we say and do, doing our part to reduce violence.

As we continue our Lenten journey, what can be closer to God's heart than peace? Let us work to mobilize our religious congregations to pray, fast, and work to end this violence.

Sincerely,

Fr. Rege Ryan, for APP

Mission Statement: The Association of Pittsburgh Priests is an organization of ordained and non-ordained women and men who act on our baptismal call to be priests and prophets. Our mission, rooted in the Gospel and the Spirit of Vatican II, is to carry out a ministry of justice and renewal in ourselves, the Church and the world.