



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP  
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

January 8, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As with each-and-every public display of protest and its now almost commonplace devolvement into mayhem, many respond with commentary as the situation unfolds and in its aftermath. Words are never adequate, nor are they capable of an all-encompassing answer that will avoid further division or acrimony. We have, as a society, thrown aside common decency and the dignity proper to every human being, and embraced a shouting, tantrum-like language and destructive behavior that is anything but civil; it does not invite respect, nor does it bring about the hoped-for lasting solution to any issues, especially issues of peace and justice in a diverse society.

We have lost face as a nation and as a people over these years of unrest, because our sins against one another betray our sins against our Creator as well. Now, the iconic Capitol of our nation, and the Congress itself, have been attacked. Private and public property has been violated numbers of times, as has human dignity. Even the innocent child in the womb has suffered the effects of a society that is willing to throw aside common decency.

The often-repeated call, “Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country” should be much more than a typing class exercise. Rebuild, rather than destroy. Respect rather than relegate. Return to God with remorse and to one another with recognition. As we say at Mass, before we approach its very prayers and Sacrament of Holy Communion: “*Let us acknowledge our sins and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the Sacred Mysteries.*” An honest reflection does not exonerate us from guilt, but prods us to awareness that we can and ought to do better before God and one another.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci  
Bishop of Manchester