



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

August 26, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I am writing to you in all haste to call us all in the Diocese of Manchester to go to Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and, in the Holy Spirit, implore God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth, to spare His creatures, His children, who at this time experience the perils of violence and extremism.

The grave situation in Afghanistan compels us to direct our efforts to God who knows every heart, who punishes and then has mercy, whose patience is directed toward salvation, as the Sacred Scriptures record. I ask us all to join in three days of prayer: August 30, the eve of a set departure date for US troops; August 31, the expected day of departure; and September 1, the day after the departure. These three days will see many examples of what human beings are capable of. May the greatest, overarching examples on the part of all be of the highest good will.

Many are fleeing, many are not able to leave Afghanistan during this time of transition. Most are fearful and all are suffering. Our troops and those of our Allies continue to bring heroic compassionate aid, with every knowledge of the dangers they face along with those whom they selflessly and tirelessly try to help. One's homeland is held in the heart as a place of security, built on sacrifice, memories and hope for the future. When, in the course of history this security is missing, human goodness must become the instrument of God, the sign of the Presence of God, the restoration of peace that comes from God.

I am asking for priests to celebrate Mass on Monday August 30, that the Votive Mass #32 "For Refugees and Exiles" be offered and Eucharistic Prayer IV with its proper Preface be offered.

On Tuesday August 31, the Votive Mass #31 in the Roman Missal "In Time of War or Civil Disturbance" again with Eucharistic Prayer IV and its proper Preface be offered.

I ask that on Wednesday September 1, the Votive Mass #41 "For Relatives and Friends" again with Eucharistic Prayer IV and its proper Preface be offered. In this Mass we pray for all our Armed Forces, and the many, whom being bound by charity, God requires us to call brothers and sisters. On this day we must pray for the whole world and all its people and all that is in it.

I know that many parishes continue the most laudable practice of Adoration of Our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Likewise, the many churches where people gather to pray the Rosary of Our Most Blessed Mother. During these three days I ask that all our people join in these prayers. As these days precede the memorial day of September 11, 2001, some may wish to observe a novena of prayer (The Perpetual Novena of the Miraculous Medal) which is, for us in our tradition, a most powerful composition of prayers through which miracles have been granted.

May God grant a gracious answer to our prayers, and look upon His children in peril “with a serene and kindly countenance” and grant peace to our world, our churches and to all who seek His face.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter A. Libasci". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci
Bishop of Manchester