



Diocese of Worcester
Office of the Bishop
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

September 3, 2021

Dear friends in Christ,

“Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.”

So often have we said or heard these words but what does it mean to remember?

A memory is a part of us. The memories of loved ones who have died remain a part of us. To remember is to consciously make them present to us even when they cannot be there in person.

Twenty years have passed since a deep darkness overcame our nation on 9-11 in the horrific suicide attacks in New York City, at the Pentagon and in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Darkness tried to overcome the light as hatred and killing tried to be al Qaeda’s irrational way to lash out at America and at all we represented. Nearly three thousand people died as a result of this senseless and cruel act of terrorism, from innocent victims at work or in travel to many first responders who risked their lives to help those in need.

We will never fully understand and never completely make sense of that fateful and tragic day. Wars and terrorism have continued since 9-11, and new battlegrounds will appear as nations exercise their duty to defend their citizens. But we must remember this: darkness never ultimately wins. For Christians only the light can be victorious, the Light of Christ which brings eternal rest to those who have died. A Light that brings comfort to those who mourn. And a Light that brings hope for the future that mankind can find alternatives to violence and war. The Light of Christ will always be our source of hope for the ultimate victory of Divine Love over evil and death.

Let us not let this anniversary pass in vain. I would ask you to join me in a moment of silence to remember and pray. Pray that mankind will learn that violence is not the answer. Pray that each one of us will be a light in the world, especially when we are challenged to respond to injustice with the darkness of anger or revenge. Let this moment of remembering and prayer be the tribute we offer to those whose lives were lost.

On this somber anniversary as we prayerfully remember those who died on 9-11 twenty years ago, let us recall that we live and move in the presence of our God who is the Victor over sin and death.

May God grant our beloved dead eternal rest with the angels and saints in the new and eternal Jerusalem. Amen.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester