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**STATEMENT OF ARCHBISHOP NELSON J. PÉREZ ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>  
TERRORIST ATTACKS**

“Twenty years ago, we watched in shock and disbelief as the events in New York City, Washington D.C., and western Pennsylvania unfolded before our eyes. Although two decades have passed, our hearts still ache with sadness. Those evil and unimaginable acts extinguished thousands of innocent lives. We cannot and should not ever forget the magnitude of this tragedy.

It would have been easy to sink into the abyss of fear and despair that day. However, the American spirit prevailed in a time of crisis and shined forth with a resilient and enduring light. In the wake of disaster, our human family stood united in the presence of God.

His love flowed through us and inspired us to encounter one another with tenderness and mercy.

There are many events scheduled to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup> throughout the Philadelphia region and the nation. These commemorations rightly call on us to reflect on a dark moment as well as the fragility of the gift of life. At the same time, they present an opportunity to renew our trust and hope in God.

Please join me in praying for all of those still suffering from the moments that shattered our world 20 years ago. May they find comfort and peace in God. Let us also pray with grateful hearts for the daily sacrifices our service men and women, police, firefighters, and rescue workers. May the Lord wrap them in his mantle of protection now and always.”

*Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez*  
*Archbishop of Philadelphia*

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