

Sunday, March 08, 2015



**FOR ALL PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS**

**Parish, school communities  
asked to observe a day of  
solidarity, prayer and reparation  
on March 13**

**Auxiliary Bishop Myron J. Cotta, in a message to the faithful of the Diocese of Sacramento** issued March 6, asks parish and school communities to join in **a special day of solidarity, prayer and reparation on Friday, March 13, for Christians around the world, especially in the Middle East, who are being persecuted and martyred for their faith** in Jesus Christ. "As today's media captures and directs our attention to the persecutions and unbelievable atrocities inflicted upon our Christian brothers and sisters, it is urgent that we take to heart the call to prayer for an end to this horror," Bishop Cotta said.

**Bishop Cotta will preside at a Mass offered for all persecuted Christians on Friday, March 13 at 12:10 p.m in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, located at 1017 11th St. in Sacramento.**

"During this Lent, all parishes throughout the diocese are asked and challenged, as a sign of solidarity, to do our part by offering penance through prayer, fasting and almsgiving for those being persecuted and martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament, adoration and praying the rosary for this intention are encouraged," he noted. **"Through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, let us pray for peace and reparation, asking the Lord for his gift of grace and mercy during this most disturbing time facing the world."**

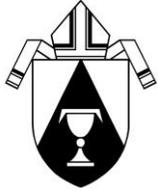
**In a report released March 6, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) officials who recently traveled to the Middle East say** the Syrian refugee crisis -- now totaling nearly 4 million refugees -- has reached a "tipping point," in which countries in the region are no longer able to handle the flow of refugees across their borders.

"Without more international support, we will find Syrians fleeing extremists being turned away and forced back to danger," said Anastasia Brown, interim executive director for USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services (MRS). "The global community, led by Europe and the United States, needs to increase its support in order to prevent a humanitarian crisis."

Entitled "Refuge and Hope in the Time of ISIS: The Urgent need for Protection, Humanitarian Support, and Durable Solutions in Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece," the report looks at the plight of Syrians in the three countries, a growing trek for Syrians attempting to reach Europe.

The report highlights the gaps Syrians face as they attempt to find protection, with many traveling through Greece and Bulgaria on their way to Europe. According to the United Nations, many more are taking dangerous sea journeys in boats to reach the continent.

Of special note is the impact the crisis is having on children, who number as many as 2 million—half the total of Syrian refugees. Among those are unaccompanied children who, according to the delegation, have a special claim on protection.



## DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

# Memo

To: The Faithful of the Diocese of Sacramento  
From: Auxiliary Bishop Cotta   
Date: March 6, 2015  
Subject: **A Day of Solidarity, Prayer and Reparation**

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As today's media captures and directs our attention to the persecutions and unbelievable atrocities inflicted upon our Christian brothers and sisters, it is urgent that we take to heart the call to prayer for an end to this horror. As we know, sin and its consequences are conquered by the triumph and glory of the Cross and Resurrection of Christ. These consequences mercilessly claim both the innocent and the guilty. There have been times throughout the history of civilization when the Church and humanity have been brought to their knees in prayer to plead for God's mercy: World War I, World War II, the rise of Communism, etc. and, now, the rise and spread of the evil terrorist groups and movements throughout the Middle East. *Now is the time for us to seriously concentrate our prayer, to "get on our knees" for the sake of our Christian brothers and sisters.*

The season of Lent encourages us to embrace the call from Heaven for repentance, prayer and penance. **Just as it was proclaimed in Lourdes and Fatima, so today, the Blessed Virgin continues to call us to prayer and penance in reparation for sin in this world and for the conversion of "poor sinners."**

During this Lent, all parishes throughout the Diocese of Sacramento are asked and challenged, as a sign of solidarity, to do our part by offering our penance through prayer, fasting and almsgiving for those being persecuted and martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament, Adoration and praying the Rosary for this intention are encouraged.

**On Friday, March 13**, you, your parishioners and your school communities are invited, as a sign of solidarity, to acknowledge this day as a special day of prayer. **You are invited to join us as we gather at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament at 12:10pm to offer a Mass for all persecuted Christians.** Through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, let us pray for peace and reparation asking The Lord for His gift of "grace and mercy" during this most disturbing time facing the world.



ISIS killing, torturing children in Iraq, UN report says. Published February 05, 2015 Associated Press



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