

Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
Statement on Conflict in the Middle East
September 2013



Pope Francis has issued a vibrant call for an end to violence in the Middle East. He has advocated for not expanding the conflict. At the same time I recall the conditions for intervention in a just war. The Catechism of the Catholic Church indicates that the strict conditions for legitimate defense by military forces require rigorous consideration. At one and the same time:

- the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain;
- all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;
- there must be serious prospects of success;
- the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition.¹

I invite all of those in authority to consider what the President of the USCCB, Cardinal Dolan, has said, as well as the Holy Father's message last Sunday. These considerations are important before any military action is decided upon or taken.

The Holy Father, during his Angelus appeal for peace on September 1st, said:

"There are so many conflicts in the world which cause me great suffering and worry, but in these days my heart is deeply wounded in particular by what is happening in Syria and anguished by the dramatic developments which are looming....It is neither a culture of confrontation nor a culture of conflict which builds harmony within and between peoples, but rather a culture of encounter and a culture of dialogue; this is the only way to peace. May the plea for peace rise up and touch the heart of each person so that all may lay down weapons and allow themselves to be led by the desire for peace."²

The September 3rd statement of Cardinal Dolan and Bishop Pates called for both prayer and negotiation,

'We are anguished by the terrible suffering of the Syrian people and again affirm the need for dialogue and negotiation to resolve this conflict that has wrought so much devastation.'

I urge the faithful of this Archdiocese to fast and pray for peace, as the Holy Father has requested, on Saturday, September 7th. Catholic teaching on peace may be found on the archdiocesan website, www.milarch.org, under the Resources tab.

Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio

¹ Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994, #2309.

² Pope Francis, Angelus, 1.IX.13.