

**OPENING REMARKS OF**  
**HIS EXCELLENCY, ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHE PIERRE, APOSTOLIC NUNCIO AT THE CONFERENCE**  
**“BREAKING THE IMPASSE TO ADVANCE PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA”**  
**CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA**  
**WASHINGTON, DC**  
**OCTOBER 5, 2022**

Dear brother Bishops, representing the United States and Korean Episcopal Conferences,  
Dear members and associates of the Bishops’ Committee on International Peace and Justice,  
Dear friends,

Very kindly, Bishop David Malloy of Rockford, Chairman of the USCCB Committee on International Justice and Peace asked me to address a few words to you as you begin this afternoon’s Conference. It is a pleasure to do so and to be with you as you make your important contribution to the cause of peace on the Korean peninsula.

I offer a particular word of welcome to the participants at the Conference who have travelled from Korea to be here for these days. I know that other consultations and visits have been planned this week during your stay in Washington, D.C. and I hope each of these appointments will bear fruit.

I claim no expertise on the Korean question. But I do not hesitate to affirm that the Church is ever supportive of initiatives that seek to build peace and promote understanding. The Lord includes “the peacemakers” in that solemn list of *the blessed* when he pronounces his beatitudes. And indeed, all who engage in the work of promoting and maintaining peace are in that sacred category. Your efforts here, which are directed towards assisting in the process of dialogue that will – please God – lead to a lessening of tensions and build up unity, are to be welcomed.

The Holy See has a lively interest in the good of the peoples of Korea. We recently celebrated the feast day of the Korean Martyrs, our brothers and sisters in the faith who remained committed to the Lord to the end. Their inclusion in the universal liturgical calendar is a kind of incorporation of the land and the people of Korea into the heart of the Church.

In recent decades that concern of the Holy See has expressed itself in the Apostolic Visits to Korea of Pope John Paul II in 1984, and again in 1989; and that of Pope Francis in 2014.

I would like to repeat some of the words Pope Francis used when he addressed civil authorities and diplomats during that letter visit. He remarked:

“I can only express my appreciation for the efforts being made in favor of reconciliation and stability on the Korean peninsula, and to encourage those efforts, for they are the only sure path to lasting peace. Korea’s quest for peace is a cause close to our hearts, for it affects the stability of the entire area and indeed of our whole war-weary world.

The quest for peace also represents a challenge for each of us, and in a particular way for those of you dedicated to the pursuit of the common good of the human family through the patient work of diplomacy. It is the perennial challenge of breaking down the walls of distrust and hatred by promoting a culture of reconciliation and solidarity...”

Pope Francis concludes:

“Peace is not simply the absence of war, but ‘the work of justice’ (cf. *Is* 32:17). And justice, as a virtue, calls for the discipline of forbearance; it demands that we not forget past injustices but overcome them through forgiveness, tolerance and cooperation. It demands the willingness to discern and attain mutually beneficial goals, building foundations of mutual respect, understanding and reconciliation. May all of us dedicate these days to peace, to praying for it and deepening our resolve to achieve it” (*Address to Authorities, Blue House, Seoul, 14 August 2014*).

Indeed, I cannot put it any better myself: may all of us, gathered here for this Conference, for this exchange between the U.S. and Korean Bishops’ Conferences, may all of us dedicate these days to peace.

Thank you again for your invitation and for your commitment to peace and reconciliation.