

GREETING OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
20TH NATIONAL CATHOLIC PRAYER BREAKFAST
WALTER E. WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER – WASHINGTON, D.C.
FEBRUARY 28, 2025

Thank you, Mr. Randall, for inviting me to this Prayer Breakfast once again. To all of you: please know of the spiritual closeness of the Holy Father Pope Francis. He cares for the people of this country, and he values our unity with him in faith and in hope. He wants to encourage us in our prayer and action for the common good, and for the promotion of “the infinite and transcendent dignity of every human person”.¹ I also wish to thank you, on his behalf, for your prayers for him during this time of hospitalization.

As Christians, we have a different method than what the world offers. It’s not the usual polemics. Our approach involves prayer, listening, and the beatitudes. Prayer is not just a ritual moment, but the motor of our life. It’s listening to the voice of God, experiencing the presence of God, and being transformed by his presence. This presence of Jesus, which we first experience ourselves, should in turn be seen and felt by others. That’s what makes us living witnesses of Jesus: Others see us as someone who’s been transformed by encounter.

In our prayer this morning, let’s *listen* to the Holy Spirit and to each other. In this way, our prayer will produce resolutions to act in a way that is more just, loving, and fraternal in the situations in which we find ourselves as a nation. By doing this, we will offer the unique prophetic witness that our country needs right now.

Before offering a short prayer, allow me to quote the words of the Holy Father in his recent encyclical on the Sacred Heart. He says:

It is only by starting from the heart that our communities will succeed in uniting and reconciling differing minds and wills, so that the Spirit can guide us in unity as brothers and sisters. Reconciliation and peace are also born of the heart. The heart of Christ is “ecstasy”, openness, gift and encounter. In that heart, we learn to relate to one another in wholesome and happy ways, and to build up in this world God’s kingdom of love and justice. Our hearts, united with the heart of Christ, are capable of working this social miracle.²

¹ Pope Francis, Letter to the Bishops of the United States of America, 10 February 2025, 9.

² Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Dilexit Nos* on the Human and Divine Love of the Heart of Jesus Christ, 24 October 2024, 28.

And so, as we pray together from the heart, I will use words taken from the Roman Missal, the Mass *For Charity*. Let us pray.

Set our hearts aflame, O Lord,
with the Spirit of your charity, we pray,
that we may always think thoughts
worthy and pleasing to your majesty
and love you sincerely in our brothers and sisters.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.