



Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs

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Dear Dialogue Partner,

May the blessings and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in the unity of the Holy Spirit be with you. Even though many of our dialogues and activities have been postponed, including the National Workshop for Christian Unity, please know that you and all of our dialogue partners have been in the thoughts and prayers of our Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, all of our collaborators in dialogue, and the entire Catholic Community. At this juncture in our history all of us are united together by our fear of the unexpected and our compassion toward those who are suffering the most. May we also be united by allowing the Light of Christ to shine brightly as a beacon of hope.

You may have seen reported in the media a special invitation that Pope Francis has offered for all Christians to unite together in prayer on March 25th at 12noon. March 25th is a day on which many Christians commemorate the annunciation of the angel Gabriel to Mary with the beautiful announcement that she would be the mother of the Son of God. Pope Francis has stated,

“I invite all the Heads of Churches and the leaders of all the Christian Communities, together with all the Christians of the various Confessions, to invoke the Most High, Almighty God, reciting contemporaneously the prayer that Jesus Our Lord taught us. I invite all, therefore, to do so several times a day, but, all together, to recite the Our Father next Wednesday, March 25, at midday – all together.” The prayer can ideally be said at noon, Rome time, or at noon local time, or at any other time of the day.

I would like to respectfully extend a special invitation for you and your community of faith, if you wish, to join us in this global initiative of all Christians coming together for prayer. The act itself is simple: the recitation of a prayer that most of us say on a daily basis. However, the symbol of our uniting together in Christ during these tragic times will surely inspire our people. We also can never forget the power of prayer.

Thank you for all of the sacrifices you as a church leader must be making during these challenging times. I would ask in your kindness that you remember all of us in the Catholic community in your prayers as we promise you a remembrance in our own.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera
Bishop of Scranton
Chairman, Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs