

**GREETING AND PRAYER BY HIS EXCELLENCY ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHE PIERRE**  
**APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
**NATIONAL CATHOLIC PRAYER BREAKFAST**  
**MARRIOTT MARQUIS**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C.**  
**MARCH 14, 2023**

To Mr. Mark Randall, Chairman of this event, thank you for your kind invitation. To the members of the Board of Directors, and to the many people who have worked to prepare for this morning's gathering, thank you. Distinguished guests and speakers, dear Brothers and Sisters: Good morning!

I would like to convey to everyone the paternal affection, warm greetings, and spiritual closeness of Pope Francis. When the Holy Father visited this very city in 2015, he spoke in a moving way about prayer. He said:

“Dear friends, one of the most effective ways we have to help is that of prayer.... In prayer, we all learn to say ‘Father’, ‘Dad’. And when we say ‘Father’, ‘Dad’, we learn to see one another as brothers and sisters....

“How good it is for us to pray together. How good it is to encounter one another in this place where we see one another as brothers and sisters, where we realize that we need one another.” (ST. PATRICK IN THE CITY, WASHINGTON, DC, 24 SEPTEMBER 2015)

Sadly, there are countless ways in which men make war against their brothers and sisters. One example of this is the war in Ukraine. I am grateful that we are joined today by my brother Archbishop Borys Gudziak, spiritual leader of the Ukrainian Archeparchy of Philadelphia. Archbishop Gudziak: I am happy that you are with us, because you help us “remain close to the tormented Ukrainian people”, as the Holy Father has urged us to do. Together with you, we can ask God for an end to what the Pope called “this absurd and cruel war” (GENERAL AUDIENCE, 22 FEBRUARY 2023).

Dear Brothers and Sisters, our prayer is powerful when it comes from a humble and contrite heart. Our Christian prayer is filled with hope, even in the midst of great difficulties, because it is oriented toward the Resurrection. And so: with hope and trust in the Lord, and mindful of the many urgent needs that require us to appeal to God's mercy, let us pray:

*Father of infinite compassion, look upon your people gathered here. We pray as brothers and sisters, and we pray for our brothers and sisters, both near and far away.*

*Forgive us our many failings: for the many ways in which we judge, mistreat, and abuse our fellow human beings, who are also your children.*

*Put an end to our hatred, our violence, and the words that we use to kill one another.*

*In place of these sins, pour into our hearts the gifts of love, peace, and a hunger for justice. Motivate each one of us, prompted by your Holy Spirit, to speak the truth in love, to act in justice and mercy. Help us to listen to everyone, and to journey together on a path toward unity – toward a healing of the human family.*

*Bless our time together this morning; inspire the words of those who speak to us; and bless the food that we share. May this gathering be a reflection of the banquet to which you call all of your children when your Kingdom is brought to its fullness.*

*Through Christ our Lord.*