



Gaza

“Cease-fire or no cease-fire. That is the question!”

The *fire* that needs to cease, that is fueling this war, is **hatred**! And how do you extinguish a fire that finds its origins in the very *fires* of Hell?!

This hatred is taught & ingrained, starting with the corruption of the mind, which, then, *hardens* the heart. And who's the intended target for this corruption of mind and heart? They are the most vulnerable, most impressive members of society: children the youth.

The distorted mind and heart of a person who instills deadly fear, who is driven and possessed by hatred, violence, and death, and who utilizes all of this as a means to an end can be defined as one who terrorizes the human family. This unsettling and threatening chaos can also be fostered by those who are driven by a retaliatory vengeance, which, really, will not achieve *true* and lasting peace.

These individuals can only be changed through God's intervention by way of his grace and mercy. The true and lasting - *cease-fire* - the extinguishing of that *fire* begins within the human heart.

So, I ask that all parishes include in the Prayers of the Faithful, a special intention for peace. Also, I ask that all parishes plan to have Masses offered for the intention of *peace and justice*, especially now, at the beginning of the new liturgical year and throughout the season of salvation- Christmas!

Let us pray for peace for all involved - the innocent victims - and those who are guilty of hatred, violence, and death - all who are living within the land of the Holy Family. As Pope Francis reminds us: “The God of peace never brings about war, never incites hatred, never supports violence.”

May Our Lady of Palestine pray for us during these desperate times. As I mentioned two months ago, I called all to faithfully pray the Rosary during these **urgent** times! Now, these urgent times have become **desperate** times!

It is interesting Our Lady of Palestine, who is Queen of Peace and Lady of the Rosary, has never asked, during time of war, for us to pray for a “cease-fire,” but she has directed the people to pray, specifically, for peace! For In order for peace to become a

reality, it must take root within the *warring* hearts of each of us - Jew, Palestinian, Christian, the indifferent, and the terrorist!

As we acknowledge Jesus Christ, the King, and pray for his promised return, may we cry out in one voice: "Come, Lord Jesus!" "Come soon!" May the power of his death and resurrection bind the spirit who is ***against*** the God of love, life, peace, and justice, the spirit who stands against the Church and his Anointed One, the Christ! St. Paul identifies this as the "spirit of antichrist!"

Let us, during the Christmas season and well into the New Year, offer this prayer to the Newborn Savior, Christ the Lord:

"Prince of peace, break the weapons of war and inspire the nations with your peace. May your kingdom come, O Lord." Amen.

In the Peace of Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "+ Michael J. Cotta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Bishop Cotta