



North American Dominican Co-Promoters

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## JUSTICE AND PEACE

His Eminence Francis Cardinal George, OMI  
P.O. Box 1979  
Chicago, IL 60690-1979

February 26, 2010

Your Eminence,

We write on behalf of our Christian brothers and sisters in Iraq and the situation in the past ten days that has become more perilous. Pope Benedict's statement of February 24, 2010 called on the Iraqi government to provide a basic human right--the right to security and protection --for the persecuted Christians in Iraq. We Dominicans in the United States have a longstanding relationship with Iraq through our Dominican Family on the ground there. We know you are deeply concerned about and engaged with the Iraqi refugees and the beleaguered Iraqi Christian church.

The Apostolic Nuncio in Iraq, Archbishop Francis Assisi Chullikatt, stated on February 25, 2010:

"Urgent help is needed: especially necessary is that the pressure of world opinion not fall, so that all the violence and discrimination ends immediately." "It is hoped that the local authorities will not fail to attempt anything to guarantee the defenseless all the protection to which they are entitled, precisely in virtue of their Iraqi citizenship, which they have never betrayed."

The Dominican family supports the appeals of Pope Benedict and Archbishop Francis Chullikatt. We believe in addition to our prayer we must call on the United States Government to do more, mainly calling for strategies that guarantee complete protection by the Iraqi government for religious minorities.

We ask you to use your influence and resources as president of the USCCB to shape a strong advocacy recommendation to our U.S. government. Urge our administration and through it the Iraqi government to secure rights and protection for the long suffering people of Iraq.

We will collaborate with you in all efforts to bring and end to this unfolding genocide in the cradle of Christianity.

In conclusion we share with you for your prayer and continued discernment the words sent to the Dominican Iraq Coordinating Committee from one of our Dominican Sisters of Iraq.

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Durstyne Farnan, op

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“I never understood how it feels to fall under the cross. This week taught me how and the meaning. Thank you for being Simon helping me with my cross; being under a cross, made me feel powerless and exhausted. But your action gave me the power to know that I am not standing alone. Thank you very much for being a voice for my people.”

We anticipate your response to this urgent matter. Please contact me if I can be of further assistance, Sister Durstynne Farnan, OP, 517 266 3537 or [dfarnan@adriandominicans.org](mailto:dfarnan@adriandominicans.org)

In hope through the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,



Sister Durstynne Farnan, OP  
Co-Promoter of Justice and Peace  
Iraq Coordinating Committee  
Rev. James Barnett, OP  
Rev. Richard Woods, OP  
Sister Roberta Popara, OP  
Sister Beth Murphy, OP  
Sister Arlene Flaherty, OP

P.S.

Links to additional information

[Asia News](#)

[Zenit, February 24, 2010](#)

[Apostolic Nuncio in Iraq](#)

Cc:

Reverend Howard J. Hubbard Chairman  
Committee on International Justice and Peace

Ken Hackett  
President, CRS

Stephen Colecchi,  
Director, Office of International Justice and Peace,

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MRS, USCCB