

February 21, 2003

TO: ALL THE CLERGY AND THE LAY FAITHFUL OF THE DIOCESE

RE: PRAYER ASSEMBLY FOR PEACE

The Community of the Faithful in Novaliches:

Greetings of Peace in the Lord!

“Efforts must be multiplied,” the Pope said. “One must not resign oneself, almost as if war was inevitable.”

Millions all over the world responded to this plea of the Holy Father during the ‘weekend of protests’. In our own country, ‘Stand For Peace’ was visible in the schools, communities, and churches. On February 21, His Eminence Jaime Cardinal L. Sin called for Prayer for Peace at the EDSA Shrine. Other distinguished leaders and groups are set to hold their own activities for peace in the days to come. These will be happening both in Manila and other parts of the country. These are streams of rivers that must reach the mother sea. And we are very much cheered by these developments. But the US President’s heart seems to still be intent on a pre-emptive war against Iraq.

February 28, 2003 and the days following are very important days for all our efforts now. On that day, the U.N. Inspection Team will make its final report to the U.N. Security Council. And this may also be the signal for the USA to proceed with its war of aggression. We cannot just let this day pass. We must make our voice heard against a pre-emptive strike without U.N. authorization.

“*Vox populi, vox Dei.*” On February 28, 2003, let us gather in our biggest number in the **NATIONWIDE PRAYER ASSEMBLY FOR PEACE**. In Manila, we are holding it at the **Luneta Grandstand** from **1:00 PM to 5:00 PM**. Let us double, triple, and quadruple our Stand for Peace. Let us compel the USA and its allies to abandon war and pursue the path of peace.

Thank you very much. This is our assurance: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.’ (Mt. 5:9)

Fraternally yours,

+TEODORO C. BACANI, JR., D.D.
Bishop