



Dear Archbishop Coakley,

We write to you as members of Priests Against Genocide USA, part of a broad international network that includes 2,200 priests from 58 countries, along with 22 bishops, archbishops, and two cardinals. As two million Palestinian people in Gaza continue to cry out for mercy, we humbly appeal to the Catholic leadership in the United States to speak with moral clarity and to bear courageous witness to peace and justice. Against this backdrop, the convening of President Trump's so-called "Board of Peace" in Washington, D.C. on February 19 underscores the urgent need for our Church's prophetic voice.

Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, has already raised grave concerns, describing the Board of Peace as *"an initiative that appears to be primarily aimed at protecting the interests of the major powers, without real recognition of the Palestinian people and their rights."* He reminds us that *"Christ is not absent from Gaza. He is there, crucified in the wounded, buried under the rubble, and yet present in every act of mercy, every candle in the darkness, every hand extended to the suffering."*

We therefore ask you, in a spirit of prayer and fidelity to the Gospel, to help form the conscience of our nation regarding this so-called Board of Peace and to inspire all people of goodwill to become instruments of authentic peace. The Gospels teach that peace is the fruit of truth and justice. Yet any claim to peace becomes hollow when Palestinian voices are excluded from decision-making, when systemic injustice is normalized, and when the fundamental rights of the oppressed are subordinated to profit-driven interests. Pope Leo XIV further reminds us that international humanitarian law, multilateral cooperation, and the United Nations remain essential pillars of peaceful global coexistence.

With filial esteem and confidence in your leadership, we urge you to call the Catholic community in the United States to a Lenten conversion of mind and heart—to summon us through prayer, fasting, and action to stand in steadfast solidarity with the people of Palestine. We pray that God will strengthen our Church's resolve to bear witness to truth, defend justice for the oppressed, and build pathways toward genuine peace in Palestine, in Israel, and in our own communities across America.

Sincerely in Christ,

The Steering Committee for Priests Against Genocide USA

Fr. John Heagle, Chair
Fr. Martin J. Burnham, PSS
Fr. Stephen Josoma
Fr. Elias Mallon, SA
Fr. Jacek Orzechowski, OFM
Fr. Bernard Survil
Fr. Jay Wood, OFM