



**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
Calling the Catholic Faithful to Prayer for Peace in the Middle East**

The Permanent Council of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCBC) expresses its deep concern about the war currently ravaging Iran and several countries in the Middle East. We cannot remain indifferent to this armed conflict, which risks escalating into a protracted war. During the *Angelus* on Sunday, March 1, 2026, Pope Leo XIV stated: “Stability and peace cannot be built through mutual threats or through weapons, which sow destruction, pain, and death, but only through reasonable, authentic, and responsible dialogue.”

During this season of Lent, a time of conversion and reflection, we are called to turn our hearts toward God and toward our brothers and sisters who are suffering. Faced with rising tensions and the risk of escalating war, we invite the People of God in Canada to pray for peace. Let us ask the Lord to increase the thirst for justice, reconciliation, and true peace in the world. Let us pray that the leaders involved in this armed conflict will allow the light of wisdom and dialogue to guide their decisions. Where fear and anger threaten to overwhelm hearts, may the Holy Spirit inspire gestures of openness, reconciliation, and peace.

May the message of the Gospel inspire us to be peacemakers, to cultivate solidarity with people affected by war, and to keep alive our hope for a better world. By uniting our voices in prayer, we believe that God can transform hearts and open paths where everything seems closed. Together, let us pray for peace in the Middle East and for a world reconciled in the love of Christ.

5 March 2026

Note: The Permanent Council is the second-highest governing body of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCBC), after the Plenary Assembly of Bishops. It currently comprises 14 Bishops from across Canada, including both *ex officio* members and those elected by the Plenary Assembly.