

May 3, 2011

Dear Friends,

Almost ten years after the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York and the attack on America, Osama Bin Laden is dead. A grateful nation thanks all those who were responsible in finding and destroying him.

The Vatican issued a brief statement after learning of Bin Laden's death: he "bore the most serious responsibility for spreading divisions and hatred among populations, causing the death of innumerable people, and manipulating religions to this end. In the face of a man's death, a Christian never rejoices, but reflects on the serious responsibilities of each person before God and before men, and hopes and works so that every event may be the occasion for the further growth of peace and not of hatred."

As a nation we reflect on nearly ten years of war and the many who have died as innocent victims of terrorism. The saddest day for many had to be September 12, 2001 when many realized that their family members who had peacefully left for work on the morning of September 11th did not return home during the night.

As a nation we prayed for our young men and women who joined the armed services to fight in Afghanistan and Iraq. We mourned the death of thousands of them and cried for those who lost their limbs. We admire their courage and the willingness of many to re-enlist for another tour of duty.

Nearly 2000 were killed or wounded in Madrid on the morning of March 11, 2004 as bombs were timed to explode one after the other creating the maximum amount of fear just before the Spanish elections.

We remember seeing in our newspapers the faces of people covered with white bandages emerging from the London underground after explosions ripped through the subway cars. Nearly 760 innocent commuters were killed or wounded during the morning commute of July 7, 2005.

Young people gathered in great numbers to cheer the news of Osama's death the morning of May 2nd in the streets of New York and Washington, D.C. They gathered in Times Square, at the World Trade Center site and in front of the White House. Who could blame them for cheering? Those who are eighteen years old today were only innocent eight year old children when the war began. Osama changed their world on September 11, 2001. Many of them lost a parent, a brother, a sister, an uncle or an aunt. They grew up these many years hearing about bombs, walking through security checkpoints and hugging a family member good bye as they left to fight in far away countries.

Osama has gone to be judged by God. He has already been judged by us.