

For Immediate Release

Fall 2017

Maureen Flynn - Contact
25th International Week of Prayer and Fasting Coalition
(703) 707-0799, www.iwopf.org, info@iwopf.org

October 1 – 9, 2017

Coalition Announces Global Prayer and Fasting Campaign and Visit of of Saint John Paul II Blood Relic

Washington, D.C: Today our world faces unprecedented crises: the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history (Las Vegas, Nevada), nuclear threat from North Korea, escalating global terrorism, widespread civil unrest, the accelerating breakdown of marriage and family life, and thousands have been severely impacted by natural disasters like Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. As we commemorate the 100th Anniversary of our Lady's apparitions at Fatima, we remember the words of **Sister Lucia of Fatima: "Final confrontation between the Lord and Satan will be over family and marriage."**

In response to these crises, an international coalition of Catholic organizations is mobilizing for the **25th International Week of Prayer and Fasting (IWOPF)** from **October 1 – 9, 2017**. This year the Coalition is uniting with **The Marians of the Immaculate Conception, Legion of Mary, Priests for Life, and many other groups** to pray and fast for the conversion of all nations, to build a culture of life, to defend the sanctity of marriage and family life, and to implore God's Mercy for peace.

For the ninth and final day—**Monday, October 9th**—people are asked to participate in an all-day Eucharistic Prayer Vigil for our nation and the world at the **Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. from 9 AM – 4:30 PM**. Registration is **FREE** online at www.iwopf.org where you can also register your **prayer pledges**. People around the globe are also urged to participate as individuals, families, and parishes by **attending daily Masses and holy hours, going to Confession, praying the Rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and fasting for the goals of this week.**

The Eucharistic Prayer Vigil on Monday October 9th will also feature the **First Class Blood Relic of St. John Paul II. It is the only relic of its kind that travels the world.** What is most impressive is that the blood is **still liquefied**, even after ten years. The reliquary is in the form of a book, recalling the Book of the Gospels that was laid on his coffin during his funeral Mass. Many recall the wind that turned the pages of the Gospels until the whole book finally closed, symbolic of the life of St. John Paul II who spent his life living and preaching the Gospel with his words and deeds. The relic will be available for veneration from **9 AM – 4:30 PM** at the **Basilica on October 9th**.

"Prayer and fasting is critical at this time in history," says **Celebrant and Homilist, Bishop Joseph Perry**. Bishop Perry is Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago, IL and Chairman of

the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on African American Catholics (2004 - present).

Basilica Day will include:

Dynamic speakers; the Global Living Rosary prayed by the Asian, African, and Hispanic communities, as well as members of the **Children's Rosary; Procession of the Nations** before the *noon Mass*; and Recitation of the **Divine Mercy Chaplet** and **Confession** throughout the day

Speakers at the Basilica include:

- **Immaculée Ilibagiza**, a Rwandan genocide survivor who is regarded as one of the world's leading experts on faith, hope, and forgiveness.
- **Teresa Tomeo**, best selling author, syndicated Catholic talk show host, and speaker with more than thirty years of experience in print and broadcast media.
- **Eric Scheidler**, executive director of the Pro-Life Action League. Under Eric's direction, the Pro-Life Action League has expanded its national leadership role to include coordination of large nationwide events like the 2012 Stand Up for Religious Freedom rallies and the National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children, launched in 2013.
- **Lou Engle**, is **co-founder of TheCall, a prayer and fasting movement** responsible for gathering hundreds of thousands around the globe. For more than three decades, Lou's passion has been to call believers into radical consecration through prayer, fasting, and acts of justice. He is the founder of the pro-life ministry, Bound 4 Life, and has inspired other justice movements. Lou resides in Colorado Springs, CO, where TheCall is headquartered.

In 2014, the International Week of Prayer and Fasting movement received an apostolic blessing from **Pope Francis**. The movement also received two apostolic blessings from **Pope Saint John Paul II** and heartfelt support from **Saint Teresa of Calcutta**, who proclaimed: ***"You must do this week – God wants this. Prayer is the answer to the world's problems."***

In the words of Coalition chairperson, Maureen Flynn, ***"Peace will not come to the world from the meetings and agreements of world leaders. Peace can only come to us through conversion and the return of humanity to God, to which we are being called by means of prayer, fasting, and penance."***

###