

Statement of the Ukrainian Catholic Hierarchy of the United States on Commemoration of September 11

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

On September 11, 2001, the United States of America experienced the darkest hour in its recent history — the deadly terrorist attack that claimed the lives of nearly 3,000 people.

Twenty years have passed, but we still feel the consequences of the tragedy that shook the world and caused profound trauma in the global community. In one day we lost our sense of invulnerability. After September 11, we — our nation and all humanity — became a deeply wounded people.

But this is not where the story ends. After September 11, 2001 we saw suffering and death, pain and sorrow but also courage, sacrifice, unity, and resurrection. During the attacks, evil manifested itself to be conquered by heroic love.

“Here in New York, we just don’t remember 9/11 — we celebrate 9/12,” commented Cardinal Timothy Dolan quoting one of the New York priests. This is our most precious memory — we remember the unspeakable tragedy and we remember what happened next. We remember solidarity, witness, prayer, service, and hope. In his appeal issued right after the attacks Metropolitan Stefan Soroka focuses on hope. “Christians are called to be primary instruments of hope and comfort to our fellow brothers and sisters... as opposed to be avenues of despair”. “Choose to be messengers of compassion and hope,” he asked our fellow faithful of Philadelphia Metropolia. We believe that this call is relevant today. The world has changed but many challenges remained, particularly the struggle for basic human rights and human dignity. Just as 20 years ago, we need peace and justice, which cannot be attained without repentance and forgiveness, faith and sacrifice.

Today the whole world is united in prayer for those who lost their lives during the attacks. We join the global supplication remembering in a special way before God twelve

9/11 victims of Ukrainian descent.

We encourage our priests and faithful to join together in prayer to remember those who died, were injured, or lost loved ones. Let us pray for strength, healing, and consolation. Let us pray for hope that conquers despair, peace that overcomes war, good that is stronger than evil, love that lives longer than hatred, life that triumphs over death. Let us put our hope and faith in Him who trampled death by death and gave eternal life to those in the tombs.

Eternal memory!

+ Borys Gudziak

Archbishop of Philadelphia for Ukrainians

Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States

+ Paul Chomnycky, OSBM

Eparch of Stamford

+ Benedict Aleksiychuk

Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago

+ Bohdan J. Danylo

Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma

+ Andriy Rabiw

Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia