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For Immediate Release
February 24, 2022

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**STATEMENT OF ARCHBISHOP NELSON J. PÉREZ
REGARDING THE INVASION OF UKRAINE**

“Like so many of you, my heart aches with deep sorrow. The recent invasion of Ukraine is something we had hoped and prayed would be avoided. Peace has been shattered. Anguish, pain, and suffering have been unleashed. Events have now been put in motion that will lead to the senseless loss of countless lives, destruction of property, and a humanitarian crisis the likes of which has not been seen in several decades.

At this grave moment in history, I urge all people of goodwill to answer the call of Pope Francis to pray fervently for the people of Ukraine and for an end to this military conflict now.

On behalf of the bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated religious, and lay faithful of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, I express our firm solidarity with Ukrainian Catholics and Ukrainians here in the Philadelphia region and in Ukraine itself.

Today, I spoke with Archbishop Borys Gudziak of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia to convey those sentiments. Philadelphia is home to many ethnic Ukrainians. Their families and friends are suffering the catastrophe of war first hand. At this time of uncertainty in Eastern Europe and here at home, may God pour His mercy on all those who are suffering and may Our Blessed Mother, the Queen of Peace, wrap them in her comforting mantle.”

*Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D.D.
Archbishop of Philadelphia*

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Editor’s Note: The prayer below has special ties to Ukraine and her people. It is suggested that this oration be offered on their behalf.

*We fly to Your patronage, O Virgin Mother of God.
Despise not our prayers in our needs,
but deliver us from all dangers, since you alone are pure and blessed.
O most glorious ever-Virgin Mary,
the Mother of Christ our God, accept our prayers*

*and present them to Your Son and our God,
that for the sake of you, He enlighten and save our souls.*