

North American Old Catholic Church

Office of the Presiding Archbishop

April 13, 1008

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20050

Dear Mr. President:

Yesterday, in a decision handed down by the Supreme Court giving detainees being held at Naval Station Guantánamo Bay access to the US Court System, Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote:

"The laws and Constitution are designed to survive, and remain in force, in extraordinary times. Liberty and security can be reconciled; and in our system they are reconciled within the framework of the law."

At the prison at Guantánamo Bay, convictions can be based on evidence derived from torture, hearsay and secret evidence. Many of the accused have been held in secret prisons, denied access to lawyers for years and even tortured. It is issues similar to those now faced by detainees at Guantánamo Bay that forced our ancestors to seek out a new world. Our ancestors founded a new world, the United States of America- a new world where their lives and liberties can be guaranteed by a system of laws and jurisprudence that dispassionately dispenses out justice in accordance with the laws of our society.

It's time to shut down Guantánamo Bay, and move proceedings to a civilian court of law or a traditional military court operating in accordance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice where constitutional guarantees apply.

We must also end indefinite detention without charge. Detainees who are not charged or convicted must be sent to countries where they will not be tortured or abused.

Mr. President, to do any less than extended Constitutional guarantees to all those who are held in our prisons, regardless of the installation, nationality, or crime, brings harm to the Constitution and the United States, and to the office of President.

Always remember, you are but a custodian of the legacy of the office to which you are elected. There were others before you, and there will be others after, who will have to work with the shadows of your accomplishments and failures. Do your best for the people, and the office.

With every best wish to you and your presidency, Laura, your parents and daughters, I remain...

Cordially,

The Most Reverend Michael V. Seneco, SPSA, DD, L.Th.
Presiding Archbishop