

FORTNIGHT FOR FREEDOM



Our faith tradition teaches us that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

We are Americans. We are grateful for the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens. To be Catholic and American should mean that our allegiances, while distinct, should be complementary.

Archbishop Sample has asked pastors to arrange special events within their parishes or within vicariates to highlight the importance of defending our first freedom, in cooperation with other Christians, Jews, people of other faiths, and all who wish to defend our most cherished freedom.

The teaching of our Catholic faith obliges us to work together with fellow citizens for the common good of all who live in this land. That is the vision of our founding and our Constitution, which guarantees citizens of all religious faiths the right to contribute to our common life together.

This constitutional guarantee includes the fundamental right to those things required for human decency including the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and the right to manifest one's religion either individually or in community, in public or in private.

As we approach summer and the day of our nation's independence, the United States of Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) calls for a second annual Fortnight for Freedom, a nationwide prayer effort to support the challenges to religious liberty both at home and abroad. The USCCB suggests that the fourteen days (fortnight means the space of fourteen nights and days) from June 21 - the vigil of the Feasts of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More - to July 4, Independence Day, be dedicated to this "fortnight for freedom" - a great hymn of prayer for our country.

To remind us Americans, us Catholics, us People of Faith, of this constitutional and God-given right, the USCCB recommends that the Church focus "all the energies the Catholic community can muster" in this time of prayer. Bishops and pastors are encouraged to arrange special events to highlight the importance of defending our first freedom, in cooperation with other Christians, Jews, people of other faiths, and indeed, all who wish to defend our most cherished freedom.

Culminating on Independence Day, this special period of prayer, study, catechesis, and public action would emphasize both our Christian and American heritage of liberty.

Fortnight for Freedom is a political activity; it is not a partisan issue. It is not about defeating Obama or repealing the healthcare law. It is much more than the portion of the HHS Mandate that threatens our religious freedom. Fortnight for Freedom is about all challenges to religious liberty both at home and abroad.



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