

## **Archdiocese of Cincinnati Prays for Religious Liberty**

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati calls parishes, schools and institutions to a time of prayer for religious liberty as church bells ring at **noon on Ash Wednesday, February 22**. A suggested prayer is provided below. May the toll of bells unite us in prayer for religious freedom for all people.

As we enter into this season of Lent preparing to celebrate the fullness of life in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, let our fasting and prayer bring to fulfillment religious freedom for all. May our intentional efforts to follow Jesus Christ in our Lenten practices of fasting and prayer, lead all civic and religious leaders to unite in seeking freedom for all people to live and practice their faith.

### **A Prayer for Religious Liberty** (for individuals)

Blessed are you God and I praise you for the gift of freedom. This day, I pray especially for government leaders – the men and women elected or appointed as the stewards of our rights and the overseers of our needs. Grant them true discernment so that they may never stray from the duties with which we citizens have entrusted them to uphold our religious freedom and care for our well-being. Give me the power to touch with your truth everything and everyone I meet. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **A Prayer for Religious Liberty** (for groups)

Blessed are you Lord God.  
We praise you for the gift of freedom.  
This day,  
we pray especially for government leaders  
the men and women elected  
or appointed as the stewards of our rights  
and the overseers of our needs.  
Grant them true discernment  
so that they may never stray from the duties  
with which we citizens have entrusted them  
to uphold our religious freedom  
and care for our well-being.  
Give us the power to touch with your truth  
everything and everyone we meet.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Talking Points**

A Link from the USCCB <http://usccb.org/news/2012/12-026.cfm>

### **Take Action**

A Link from the USCCB <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/conscience-protection/index.cfm>

## **Liturgical Resource: Intercessions**

### February 22

That all government leaders may be renewed with God's love so that they may stand firm for the religious freedom for all people, let us pray to the Lord.

### February 26

That God's covenant of peace with us, with the earth, and with all living beings may inspire all civic leaders to prepare a heritage of peace and respect for life for all ages to come, let us pray to the Lord.

### March 4

That through Lenten prayer, fasting, and almsgiving offered by the Christian community as a sacrifice of thanksgiving we may transform our nation into a people who see that the poor and vulnerable receive the health care that they deserve and respect the religious freedom of all and, let us pray to the Lord.

### March 11

That the powerful and influential in our world attend to God's unchanging commandments and respond to the need for religious freedom, let us pray to the Lord.  
(Year B)

That the living waters of God's love and truth bring religious freedom to all people and a commitment to see that the poor and vulnerable receive the health care to which they are entitled, let us pray to the Lord. (Year A)

### March 18

That God, who "so loved the world that he gave his only Son," may transform hearts so as to uphold the freedom of religion for all people, let us pray to the Lord. (Year B)

That the God of light may inspire government leaders to uphold religious freedom and care for the well-being of all people, let us pray to the Lord. (Year A)

### March 25

That Jesus who died for the salvation of all may inspire civic leaders to respect the religious liberty of all people and all life from conception to natural death, let us pray to the Lord.

### April 1

That civic leaders may be guided by God's love and mercy so as to provide religious freedom, safety, food and shelter for all people, we pray to the Lord.

*These intercessions can continued to be used beyond the Lenten season as needed.*