

# 5 Ways to Celebrate Fortnight for Freedom

## Pray!

Hold a prayer group for religious freedom in your own home, or even in a public place. Eucharistic adoration, the Rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet are all forms of intercession for our country and our first freedom. Daily prayer resources are available at: [www.fortnightforfreedom.org](http://www.fortnightforfreedom.org).

## Learn!

Catholic teaching on religious freedom is rich and has much to offer our culture today. Consider getting a study group together to read and discuss what religious freedom is really all about.

## Watch!

Consider hosting a religious freedom movie night at your house or parish. Films can be a great way to learn about and reflect on our faith. Here are a few suggestions:

- *The Prince of Egypt*, about Moses leading his people to freedom (Netflix)
- *For Greater Glory*, about the struggle for religious freedom in Mexico (available at the parish office)
- *First Freedom: The Fight for Religious Liberty*, a PBS video about religious freedom

## Gather!

Get together and celebrate religious freedom with a parish picnic or barbeque. Hand out religious freedom conversation starters as a way to spur discussion about our first, most precious liberty.

## Share!

Many people take religious freedom for granted, but as an informed Catholic, we are called to protect our religious freedom rights and spread awareness!



Fortnight  
for Freedom  
June 21 – July 4



# **Frequently Asked Questions on Religious Liberty**

## **What is Fortnight for Freedom?**

Fortnight for Freedom is a time for Catholic Americans to focus, pray and act upon our religious liberties. Annually, from June 21— July 4, we celebrate a series of martyrs who remained faithful in the face of religious persecution by political power, just as we should today. If our religious liberties are not properly understood, all people suffer and are deprived of what originally made the United States the “Land of the Free.”

**What do we mean by religious liberty?** In Catholic teaching, the Second Vatican Council “declare[d] that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.” (Dignitatis Humanae, No. 2.) Religious liberty is protected in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and in federal and state laws. Religious liberty includes more than our ability to go to Mass on Sunday or pray the Rosary at home; it also encompasses our ability to contribute freely to the common good of all Americans.

**What is the First Amendment?** The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states the following: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

**What does “shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion” mean?** This phrase, known as the “Establishment Clause,” began as a ban on Congress’ either establishing a national religion or interfering with the established religions of the states. It has since been interpreted to forbid state establishments of religion, governmental preference (at any level) of one religion over another, and direct government funding of religion.

For the USCCB’s complete article on religious liberty, visit <https://goo.gl/GL2WF4>.