

Freedom to serve migrants and refugees

Pray

That the Lord would protect all migrants and refugees,
and that all those who work with people on the move would be free to serve.

Reflect

Christians are committed to caring for the vulnerable, and migrants and refugees are some of the most vulnerable. The Church has long sought to serve the unique needs of “people on the move,” from providing for basic needs, to assisting with resettlement, to offering legal services to help newcomers navigate the system of their host country. In recent years, new laws and regulations have been proposed that have the effect of restricting the Church’s ability to serve. Under one state law, even giving an undocumented person a ride to Mass could have been deemed a criminal offense. Furthermore, the new federal Administration has sought to drastically reduce the number of refugees admitted into the U.S., and has suspended the resettlement of refugees from countries where many people face violent persecution. The Church is called to serve the vulnerable, and we must remain steadfast in our commitment to solidarity with migrants and refugees

Act

The USCCB’s Justice for Immigrants Campaign is an effort to unite and mobilize a growing network of Catholic entities and people of goodwill in support of immigration reform. Get news, resources, and action alerts from Justice for Immigrants at justiceforimmigrants.org.



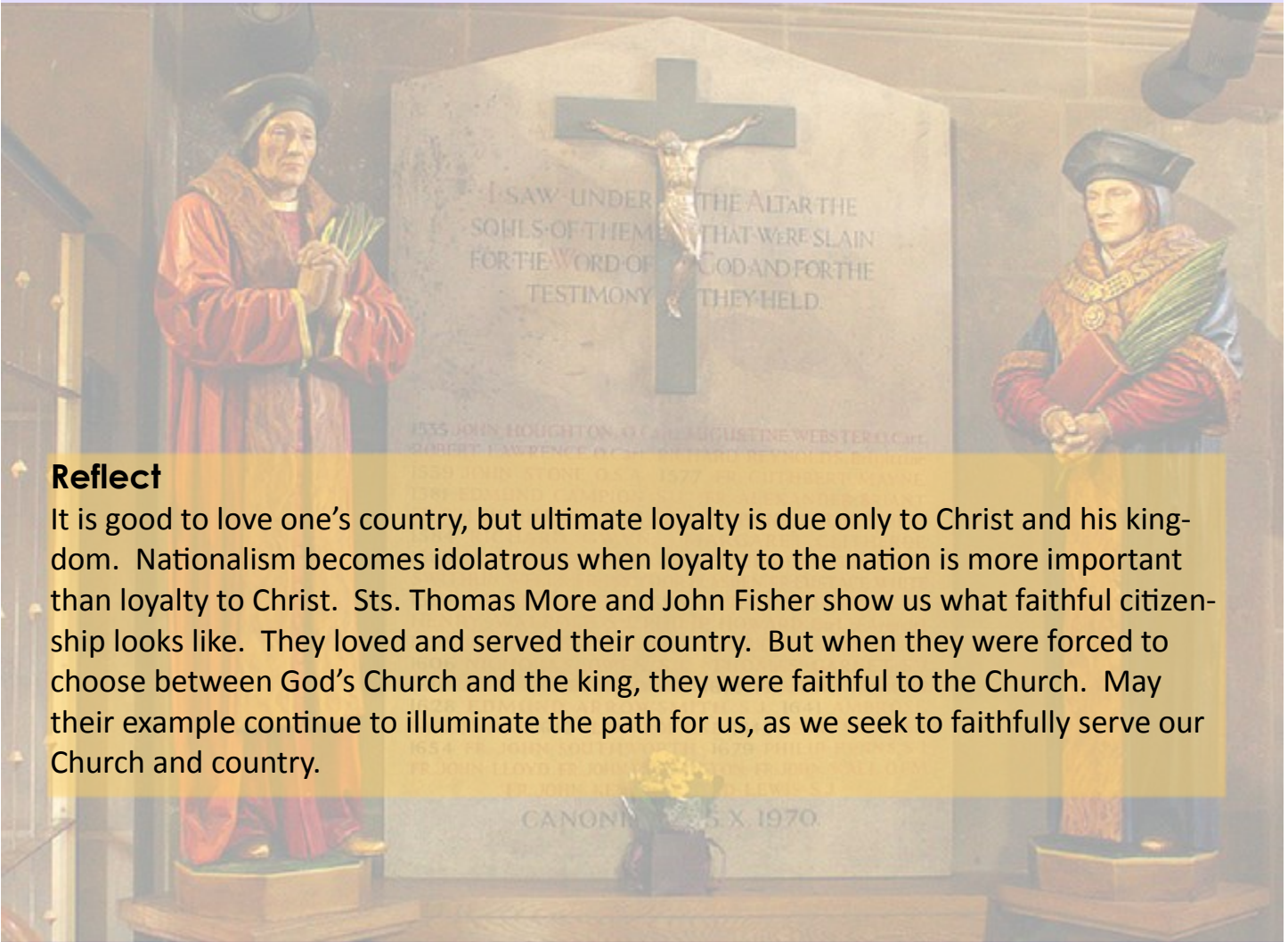
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May we be God's servants first

Pray

Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher,
pray that we would be servants of our country, but God's first.



Reflect

It is good to love one's country, but ultimate loyalty is due only to Christ and his kingdom. Nationalism becomes idolatrous when loyalty to the nation is more important than loyalty to Christ. Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher show us what faithful citizenship looks like. They loved and served their country. But when they were forced to choose between God's Church and the king, they were faithful to the Church. May their example continue to illuminate the path for us, as we seek to faithfully serve our Church and country.

Act

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. Or, host a movie night, and watch *A Man for All Seasons*, about the martyrdom of St. Thomas More.



**Fortnight
for Freedom**
2017
Freedom for Mission
June 21 – July 4

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For Christians in the Middle East

Pray

For our sisters and brothers in the Middle East; that through the intercession of the Apostles, who established these most ancient churches, Christians and all religious minorities would be freed from violent persecution.

Reflect

In July 2015, Pope Francis said, “Today we are dismayed to see how in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world many of our brothers and sisters are persecuted, tortured and killed for their faith in Jesus.... [I]n this third world war, waged piece-meal, which we are now experiencing, a form of genocide – I insist on the word – is taking place, and it must end.” Today, Christians are among those religious minorities confronted with persecution, despite their having been critical to the vitality and pluralism of the region since the earliest days of Christianity.

Act

Catholic Relief Services, Aid to the Church in Need, Catholic Near East Welfare Association, and the Knights of Columbus have all worked to assist Christians in the Middle East. Consider getting in touch with these organizations and finding out how you can participate in their work.



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Freedom to seek the Truth

Pray

That the Spirit of Wisdom would illuminate our minds and open our hearts, as we seek to know the truth about God and to live in the fullness of that truth.

Reflect

Religious freedom is rooted in the nature of the human person. Human beings have a capacity to seek and hold fast to truth. A natural desire compels each one of us to reach out and grasp the truth about God. Creation itself bears witness to the reality of God, drawing us out, inviting us to listen for God's voice. And God speaks to us. Because God has created us for communion with Him, we have a corresponding duty. The right to religious freedom flows from this duty to seek the truth. Religious freedom means immunity from coercion, but its source and summit is the truth about God.

Act

Catholic teaching on religious freedom has much to offer our culture today. Take the time [to learn more about the richness of Catholic teaching on religious freedom](#). Consider getting a study group together to read and discuss what religious freedom is really all about.



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Freedom to serve God with our whole lives

Pray

That all Christians would have the courage to serve God with our whole lives and to live out our faith with boldness and compassion.

Reflect

Christians carry out the mission of the Church by doing simple acts of charity on a daily basis. A person might check in on his elderly neighbors, or another may show her co-workers in small ways that she truly cares about their well-being. All of us, from every walk of life, are to infuse our work and daily activities with Christian charity. Sometimes, our culture urges us to think of our faith as a strictly interior matter. The culture says that we are free to worship, or to be spiritual, but our faith should not be expressed publicly. A culture in which faith is never visible tends to be one that constricts religion. Christ calls us to a whole life of discipleship. We exercise our faith in all that we do.

Act

The life of faith begins with prayer. Hold a prayer vigil for religious freedom. Eucharistic adoration, the Rosary, and the Divine Mercy Chaplet can all be forms of intercession for our country and our first freedom. Another great way to pray for our country year-round is the Call to Prayer for Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty. [Sign up today!](#)



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Freedom to bear witness to Truth

Pray

That the Holy Spirit would give us the courage to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel, even in the face of social and legal pressure.

Reflect

We must stand up for the civil right to be free from government coercion. At the same time, we Christians must be mindful that our freedom comes from Christ, and so we are always free when we remain in Christ. When a government attempts to force us to violate our consciences, we must witness to the truth. A state that coerces the conscience of its citizens radically oversteps its proper boundaries. Rather than resist as a revolutionary, the Christian bears patient witness to the truth, even if that witness leads to punishment. The martyrs are great examples of this. The key to martyrdom is witness to truth. In this respect, we are all called to be martyrs.

Act

Start speaking up today! [Reflect on how to respectfully engage in conversation about religious freedom](#). Share with others why religious freedom is good for all people.



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