

VOTE WITH MERCY

Daily Prayers leading up to US Election Day 2020

In the lead up to the election, we as members of the Mercy family approach our voting by taking the time to educate ourselves, engage in conversations and to prayer.

Each day, in addition to those who are casting the votes and running for office, we ask you to bring into your heart and spirit, those who are most impacted by the different issues that are part of our Mercy's Critical Concerns: Anti-Racism, Earth, Immigration, Nonviolence and Women as well as the act of voting in this year. We acknowledge the intersection of many of these issues and share our gratitude for how your prayer like over these weeks will help the collective spirit of the nation.

Oct 5	As we enter into what is likely to be an extended election season, pray for civil discourse among candidates and the electorate .
Oct 6	Be attentive to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor as you study candidates' positions.
Oct 7	Pray that elected leaders will embrace diplomacy rather than military action to resolve conflict. The State Department budget (\$41 billion) is less than six percent of the Department of Defense budget (\$712 billion).
Oct 8	Pray that white Americans lay aside their white privilege and take action to recognize and reject the systemic racism that continues to plague the United States four hundred years after the first enslaved Africans were brought to what is now the U.S.
Oct 9	Pray for women who must consider the demands of caregiving when making plans to cast their ballots.
Oct 10	Pray for voters who have to take into consideration wildfires, extreme storms, pollution alerts and other impacts of climate change and the extraction of fossil fuels as they make plans to cast their ballots.

Oct 11	Pray for the <i>children and parents, separated by U.S. immigration policy</i> , who have not yet been reunited.
Oct 12	Pray that city, county and state officials will recognize that <i>civilian law enforcement is not military action</i> and will not seek or accept military grade weapons and other equipment for use in local law enforcement.
Oct 13	Court actions in recent years have seriously weakened the 1965 Voting Rights Act leading to use of a variety of tactics to suppress the franchise in communities of color. Be alert and pray those whose <i>voices are being suppressed</i> by the tactics in your area—such as loss and/or relocation of polling places, long lines at the polls, intimidation of voters, and report to local election officials.
Oct 14	Pray for the <i>health and safety of people working at the polls</i> during early voting and on Election Day.
Oct 15	Reflect on these words of Pope Francis: “ <i>Healthy politics calls for greater involvement and inclusion</i> of all leaving no one in the margins and such politics does not plunder and pollute natural resources that are not a bottomless pit but a treasure given us by God to be used with respect and intelligence.” – Pope Francis, visit to Cesena, Italy, 2017
Oct 16	Remember all the <i>immigrants held in detention</i> who face increased risk of exposure to the coronavirus due to crowding and frequent transfer between detention facilities.
Oct 17	Pray that elected leaders will <i>shift money from the Department of Defense budget</i> to programs addressing critical human needs, both domestic and global. The coronavirus pandemic has clearly demonstrated that the most serious threats to our security cannot be remedied by military action.
Oct 18	People of color are overrepresented in the U.S. criminal justice system. Pray that elected leaders including judges will <i>acknowledge the racial biases</i> that riddle our legal system and take swift action to assure equal justice for all.

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Oct 19	On this centenary of women winning the right to vote, pray in gratitude for all the women who marched, wrote petitions, endured hunger strikes and made other sacrifices so that their descendants could participate in the electoral process.
Oct 20	Pray for asylum-seekers whom the Migrant Protection Protocols are forcing to wait in dangerous Mexican border towns for court dates that could be months or even years away.
Oct 21	Pray that our elected leaders will acknowledge U.S. complicity in creating conditions that force people to flee their home countries and move U.S. foreign policy in a new direction.
Oct 22	Seventy-five years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear weapons remain a threat. Pray that elected leaders will abandon efforts to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal and reengage the U.S. in international nuclear arms control treaties that the current administration has abrogated.
Oct 23	Reflect on these words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. ” (Letter from a Birmingham Jail, 1963)
Oct 24	Join the U.S. bishops in pledging to “ root my political viewpoints in the Gospel and a well formed conscience ,” which involves prayer, conversation, study and listening.”
Oct 25	Pray with and share with others the <u>U.S. bishops' postcard</u> that calls us to protect life, preserve that which sustains life and care for Our Common Home.
Oct 26	Pray for a change of heart so that U.S. citizens come to recognize immigrants as sisters and brothers eager to use their gifts in service to their communities.

Oct 27	Easy access to firearms including military-grade weapons has led to the United States having the highest level of gun violence in the industrialized world. Pray that elected leaders will frame gun violence as a public health issue and enact policies that address root causes of this ongoing crisis in the U.S.
Oct 28	The Coronavirus pandemic has highlighted disparities in access to health care, housing, employment and nutritious food which have made communities of color more vulnerable to serious illness and death from COVID-19. Pray that elected officials will prioritize these areas and formulate concrete plans to overcome these historic gaps.
Oct 29	Pray for all the young women who are finding their voice this election season and voting for the first time.
Oct 30	Pray for voters who are still discerning how they will vote, that they will consider how their choices will impact our Critical Concerns – Anti-racism, Earth, Immigration, Nonviolence and Women.
Oct 31	Reflect on the words of civil rights icon John Lewis, in a 2012 speech in Charlotte, N.C.: "My dear friends: Your vote is precious, almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have to create a more perfect union."
Nov 1	Reflect on the words of Pope Francis: "We need to participate for the common good. Sometimes we hear: a good Catholic is not interested in politics. This is not true: good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern." - Pope Francis, 9/16/13
Nov 2	Pray for patience for the American people in the likelihood that we need to wait days or even weeks for official election results.
Nov 3	ON this Election Day, pray for those going to the polls today , that they will be guided by the Spirit, for poll workers who may be under great stress and for those who may be tempted to engage in violence, that they might find peace in their hearts.