

# Election Novena

The Catholic bishops of the United States offer guidelines for forming our consciences for faithful citizenship in preparation for voting on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Gracious and loving God, help us to draw on their guidance and the resources of our faith as we exercise our responsibility to shape a society more respectful of the life, dignity, and rights of all people.

Mindful of our responsibility to love one another, today we focus on:

## **(Day 1) Sun. Oct. 26 Discrimination and Prejudice**

Reading: (Gal 3:28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Petition: For leaders who will preserve the dignity of human persons regardless of age, disability, racial or ethnic background, we pray to the Lord...

## **(Day 2) Mon. Oct. 27 the Consistent Ethic of Life**

Reading: (Deu 30:19) I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live.

Petition: For leaders who will uphold a consistent ethic of life from conception to death, by opposing abortion and euthanasia, we pray to the Lord...

## **(Day 3) Tues. Oct. 28 Reduction of Poverty**

Reading: (Mat 25:37-40, 45) Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.' ...what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.'

Petition: For leaders who will support policies which seek to reduce poverty, by providing decent work at a fair living wage, and encouraging economic improvement through union membership and other forms of economic activity, we pray to the Lord...

## **(Day 4) Wed. Oct. 29 the Death Penalty and Torture**

Reading: (Mt 5:43-48) "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Petition: For leaders who will respect the human dignity of all vulnerable members of society including criminals by elimination of the death penalty, and of prisoners by prohibiting the use of torture, we pray to the Lord...

## **(Day 5) Thur. Oct. 30 Immigration**

Reading: (Lev 19:34) You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the LORD, am your God.

Petition: For leaders who will provide fair and dignified ways for immigrant workers to enjoy the benefits of U.S. residence, and provide opportunities for attaining citizenship, we pray to the Lord...

## **(Day 6) Fri. Oct. 31 the Preferential Option for the Poor**

Reading: (Luke 18:18-22) An official asked him this question, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "...You know the commandments, ...And he replied, "All of these I have observed from my youth." When Jesus heard this he said to him, "There is still one thing left for you: sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Petition: For leaders who will support economic policies and programs that give preferential treatment to the poor and vulnerable because they are in the greatest need, we pray to the Lord...

## **(Day 7) Sat. Nov. 1 Ending War and Beginning the Reign of Peace**

Reading: John 13: 34 I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.

Petition: For leaders who will work to find ways to eliminate war in the world, and develop peace and justice for all nations, we pray to the Lord...

## **(Day 8) Sun. Nov. 2 Healthcare and Medical Ethics**

Reading: (Mat 10:8) Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.

Petition: For leaders who will provide accessible and affordable healthcare for all, support a strong code of medical ethics, and seek to improve the health and well-being of all through ethical research on stem cells and efforts to eliminate cancer, and other diseases, we pray to the Lord...

## **(Day 9) Mon. Nov. 3 Good Stewardship and Preservation of God's Creation**

Reading: (Gen 1:27-31) God said: "See, I give you every seed-bearing plant all over the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food; and to all the animals of the land, all the birds of the air, and all the living creatures that crawl on the ground, I give all the green plants for food." And so it happened. God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good.

Petition: For leaders who seek ways to preserve the natural environment and who care for all of God's creation, we pray to the Lord...

### Let us pray.

We thank you, Lord, for our freedom and the opportunity to exercise our responsibility to participate in the governance of our state and nation. Help us to form consciences of faithful citizenship that guard against allowing a commitment to a single isolated aspect of the Church's social doctrine to exhaust our responsibility to the overall common good. We pray that our participation in the upcoming election will lead to a world of greater justice and peace, respect for all humanity, bring an end to war and violence, and promote peace and development for all nations.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

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## Further References Catholic Social Justice Issues

### United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:

[www.FaithfulCitizenship.org](http://www.FaithfulCitizenship.org) *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*  
[www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rfp/lori.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rfp/lori.pdf) *Conscience and the Catholic Voter*  
[www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/index.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/index.shtml) (click on Issue Campaigns)  
[www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org)  
[www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/TheChallengeofPeace.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/TheChallengeofPeace.pdf)  
*The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*  
[www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/penaltyofdeath.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/penaltyofdeath.pdf)  
*A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death*  
[www.usccb.org/mrs/stranger.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/mrs/stranger.shtml)  
*Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*, 2003  
[www.usccb.org/bishops/table.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/bishops/table.shtml) *A Place at the Table: A Catholic Recommitment to Overcome Poverty and to Respect the Dignity of All God's Children*  
[www.usccb.org/bishops/directives.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/bishops/directives.shtml)  
*Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services*  
[www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.shtml) *Renewing the Earth: An Invitation to Reflection and Action on the Environment in Light of Catholic Social Teaching*  
[www.osjspm.org](http://www.osjspm.org) (click on Catholic Social Teaching, Social Teaching Documents)

### Papal Encyclicals:

[www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0141/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0141/_INDEX.HTM)  
*Encyclical on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life (Gospel of Life),*  
*March 25, 1995, John Paul II*  
[www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0217/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0217/_INDEX.HTM)  
*Encyclical on Human Work, Sept. 14, 1981, John Paul II*

### Indiana Catholic Conference (Bishops of Indiana):

[www.indianacc.org](http://www.indianacc.org) (click on Resources)  
*The Death Penalty: No Justice, No Healing, No Closure*  
*Care for the Earth*  
*I Was a Stranger, and You Welcomed Me: Meeting Christ in New Neighbors*

# Election Novena

The novena may be prayed using a single petition each day, or may be prayed daily in its entirety for nine days.



"Election Novena" is based on the United States Bishops' reflection "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" ([www.faithfulcitizenship.org](http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org)) which addresses the themes of Catholic social teaching and lay participation in political life without endorsing political parties or candidates.



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