

You are receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in USCCB Religious Liberty updates. Don't forget to add freedom@usccb.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

News and resources from the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty



Free to Serve USCCB Religious Liberty News *"We are Catholics, We are Americans"*

June 2016
Vol. II: No. 6

New and Notable

Fortnight for Freedom 2016: Witnesses to Freedom

The Fortnight for Freedom is underway! We are celebrating 14 stories of people of faith who bear witness to authentic freedom in Christ. We are also coordinating a nationwide tour of relics of Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher, courtesy of Stonyhurst College in the UK. New Fortnight materials and relics tour information are available at www.fortnight4freedom.org.

Stay connected with us!

Follow us on Twitter to receive the most up-to-date news and resources for the Fortnight - [@usccbfreedom](https://twitter.com/usccbfreedom)

Relic Tour for Fortnight Highlights Saints' Courage, Religious Liberty

A nationwide tour of relics of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher, two 16th-century martyrs who exemplified courage and conviction in the face of persecution, is part of the U.S. Catholic Church's Fortnight for Freedom observance this year. The relics will travel with Jan Graffius, curator of collections at Stonyhurst, where they are kept. "Relics are reminders of people we love," Graffius told The Visitor, newspaper of the Diocese of St. Cloud, one of the stops on the tour. "Parents keep baby shoes, locks of hair (and) birthday cards as reminders of those who are important to us. A physical object such as the More relic reminds us that he was a human being, and by viewing it, we find ourselves closer to him as a person. [Read more...](#)

Archbishop Thomas Wenski Preaches at Mass to Begin Relics Tour

The Church of the Little Flower is blessed today to receive relics of two

great English saints: one, St. Thomas More, was a statesman, an intellectual, a Catholic layman who took his baptism seriously; the other was a bishop who also took his office as bishop seriously. Both were martyred by King Henry VIII because they would not consent to his making himself the head of the Church in England, which he did because the Pope would not allow him to divorce his wife. In order to have his way, he shattered the unity of the Church in his nation by separating it from Peter and Peter's successors, the bishops of Rome. [Read more...](#)

News Release: USCCB Committee Chairmen Say Federal Agency Fails to Protect Churches from California Elective Abortion Mandate

On June 21, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) declared, contrary to the plain meaning of current federal law, that the California Department of Managed Health Care can continue to force all health plans under its jurisdiction to cover elective abortions. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is calling for an immediate federal legislative remedy. [Read more...](#)

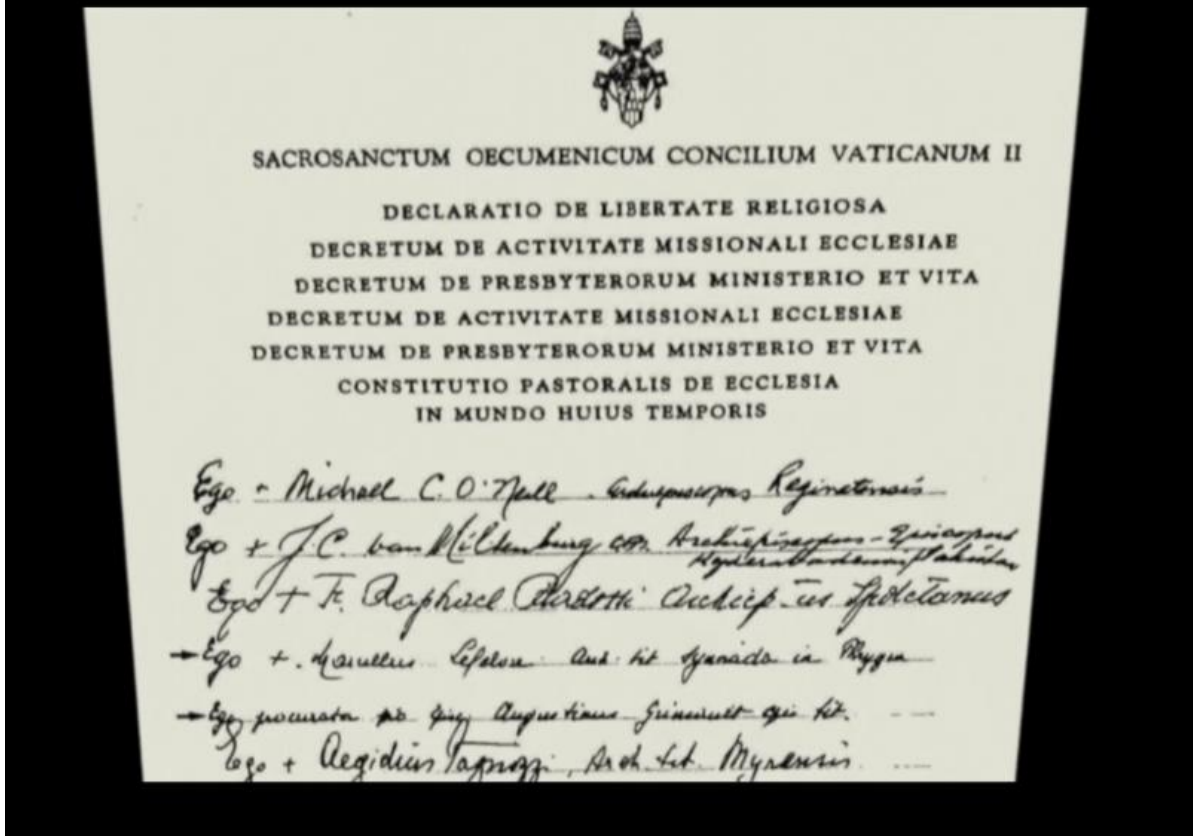
Urge Support for the Conscience Protection Act of 2016!

The Fortnight for Freedom is a great time to take action to support conscience rights. Contact your representatives and urge them to uphold the right of conscientious objection to abortion by enacting the much-needed Conscience Protection Act. The bill, now introduced into both chambers, contains the policy of what in past years has been called the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act (ANDA). [Take action today!](#)

Follow us on  [twitter](#)

Video

The Right to Religious Freedom



[Find out more](#) about what the Catholic Church teaches on religious freedom, including the groundbreaking Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*) from the Second Vatican Council.

Let's Talk! Small community gatherings are a great, simple way to build the life of our Church. They are also important for a healthy civil society. [Here are some ideas for using the new video to kick start a small-group conversation about religious freedom.](#)

Homily for Fortnight for Freedom Opening Mass

Archbishop William Lori
Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption

Tonight we celebrate the opening Mass of the 2016 Fortnight for Freedom, returning to this, the first Cathedral in the United States, a Cathedral that was under construction even as "a new nation conceived in liberty" began to take shape. But we are not here tonight to argue a point of constitutional law nor are we here to re-argue what has already been persuasively argued in our courts. No, we are here to honor the martyrs, to celebrate the freedom to bear witness, beginning with Jesus Christ, "the faithful witness" of the Father's love (Cf. Rev. 1:5), for Christ and his sacrificial love are the very heart of the Eucharist we celebrate. [Read more...](#)

freedom@usccb.org

Non datur libertas sine veritate.