



DAY EIGHT

January 28, 2020

INTERCESSION

May civic leaders work for the protection of all human life, in every stage and circumstance.

PRAYERS

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

REFLECTION

The entire moral vision of our nation is based on respect for the dignity and sanctity of the human person. The Declaration of Independence boldly affirms that first among our inalienable rights is the right to life, given to us by the Creator. Yet despite being so solemnly proclaimed, the right to life is today threatened and often denied, particularly at the moments when life is most fragile. Our laws should—first and foremost—protect life; but currently our laws abandon the most vulnerable and violate our nation’s core principles. For “there can be no genuine justice in our society until the truths on which our nation was founded are more perfectly realized in our culture and law” (*Living the Gospel of Life*, 14).

Laws and policies that legalize or promote an intrinsic evil like abortion violate the virtue of justice. Those who work as public officials and civic leaders have a duty to serve the common good, and therefore have a profound obligation to safeguard this most fundamental right. As Christians, we are called to be a leaven in the world, transforming our culture from within. Through our own prayer, witness, and civic participation, we can encourage our leaders to truly answer their call to protect the rights of all people. For “there can be no true democracy without a recognition of every person’s dignity and without respect for his or her rights” (*Evangelium vitae* 101).

ACTS OF REPARATION *(choose one)*

- Sacrifice some of your free time to do a small act of service, such as making breakfast for a family member, writing a note of encouragement for a coworker, or praying for the intentions of a friend.
- Sometimes restrictions on religious freedom constrain our efforts to live out the Gospel of Life. We must be free to live out our Catholic faith in the public square. Offer this Prayer for Religious Liberty, that Christians may always be free to respect, protect, and defend human life (www.usccb.org/prayer-for-religious-liberty).
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

ONE STEP FURTHER

In 2004, the U.S. bishops reaffirmed the Church’s consistent teaching that abortion is an intrinsic evil and offered guidance to Catholic politicians regarding this fundamental teaching. Read “Catholics in Political Life” (www.usccb.org/catholics-in-political-life), in which the bishops outline the responsibility of Catholics in the public square to share in the “unequivocal commitment to protect human life and dignity and to preach the Gospel in difficult times.”

