

USCCB offers ‘Election Novena’ as way to prepare for Nov. 3, pray for nation

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WASHINGTON (CNS) — As it did in 2016, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is encouraging people of faith to take part in an election novena beginning Oct. 26 and ending Nov. 3, Election Day.

A closing prayer for elected leaders will be offered Nov. 4, the day after the election.

“Bearing in mind our nation’s challenges and the need for wise, moral, civic leadership, four years ago our conference offered an electronic ‘Election Novena’ to help Catholics prepare for the 2016 election,” the USCCB said.

This is a graphic for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ “Election Novena.” The bishops are encouraging people of faith to participate in a novena to prepare for Election Day and pray for the nation for nine days, beginning Oct. 26 and ending Nov. 3. A closing prayer for elected leaders will be offered on Day 10, Nov. 4, the day after the election. (CNS photo/courtesy USCCB)

“Shared through social media and various email lists, the prayer effort was widely popular with the laity and very much appreciated by clergy, who are often asked to promote more partisan or issue-specific prayer campaigns,” it added in a letter sent by about a dozen USCCB committee chairmen to all U.S. bishops.

The signers’ committees represent the broad range of issues reflected in the novena intentions: cultural diversity, migration, international and domestic justice and peace, pro-life activities, racism, Catholic education, catechesis and evangelization, the promotion and defense of marriage, religious liberty, and family life and youth.

The website <https://www.usccb.org/2020-election-novena> has the daily intentions, a link to sign up to receive the intentions daily by email as well as links to PDFs of the intentions in English and Spanish and to other resources including the bishops’ quadrennial statement: “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.”

Participants are encouraged to pray one Our Father, one Hail Mary and one Glory Be after each day’s intention.

The daily intentions are as follows:

- Day One, Oct. 26: As we prepare for the national, state and local elections, in the midst of a global pandemic, may our political engagement be guided by our Catholic faith.
- Day Two, Oct. 27: In this month of the Holy Rosary, may Our Blessed Mother guide us in confronting racial inequalities and restoring peace in our communities.
- Day Three, Oct. 28: May all Americans recall the necessity of dialogue, civility and humility in this election season.
- Day Four, Oct. 29: May all people understand the moral and ethical dimensions of political decisions and decide accordingly.
- Day Five, Oct. 30: May voters and elected leaders uphold the dignity of every human life in their political engagement.
- Day Six, Oct. 31: May Catholics recall all aspects of Catholic social teaching as they consider their votes.
- Day Seven, Nov. 1: May there be a transformation of politics to focus on the dignity of the human person and the common good.
- Day Eight, Nov. 2: May we keep in mind the gift of religious freedom and our duty to defend and exercise it as faithful citizens.
- Day Nine, Nov. 3: Today, as we approach the polls, may we understand and embrace the principles of our faith that should guide our political engagement.

The closing prayer for Nov. 4 is: May the leaders elected this week be guided by the Holy Spirit as they fulfill their positions.