

Let Religious Freedom Ring!

a campaign to celebrate the Fortnight for Freedom in the Diocese of Allentown



In response to the suggestion from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the Diocese of Allentown has created a unique campaign by which to celebrate a **FORTNIGHT FOR FREEDOM** from June 21 to July 4, 2012. The campaign includes the three components called for “to highlight the importance of defending our first freedom.” The Diocese invites participation in the campaign from the Catholic faithful of the diocese and from any non-Catholic individuals or institutions that support the protection and promotion of religious freedom in our country.

THE CAMPAIGN

- The campaign features its own official **logo**, having a distinct **tag line**.



*America's First Freedom.
Too Sacred for Silence.*

- The campaign is being marketed through the creation of a dedicated **website**, with its own QR code. <www.LetReligiousFreedomRing.org>. The web site will include news about the campaign, resources to be informed about religious freedom, a listing of supporters who take a stand for religious freedom, and a calendar of activities during the fortnight along with photos and videos from the events. A special feature of the web site will be the digital countdown to the signature bell-ringing event (see below). Links to the campaign site will be made available on the diocesan and parish websites.
- Publicity for the campaign includes the production of color **“fact sheets”** to be distributed with *The A.D. Times* newspaper and made available as church bulletin inserts. In addition, two **newspaper ads** will be published in *The A.D. Times* (June 7 and June 21 editions).
- The campaign will also be featured on Diocesan **social media** (i.e., Facebook, YouTube).

PRAYER

- The Fortnight begins with **Mass on June 21st** for the vigil of the Feast of St. Thomas More, Martyr. Mass will be celebrated at St. Thomas More parish in Allentown at 6:30 p.m. The Most Reverend JOHN O. BARRES, D.D. (Bishop of Allentown) will be the principal celebrant, and the Reverend THOMAS DAILEY, O.S.F.S. (associate chaplain to the St. Thomas More Society and director of the Salesian Center for Faith and Culture) will be the homilist.
- On the **Sundays** during the Fortnight (June 24 and July 1), parishes throughout the Diocese are encouraged to pray for the intention of preserving and promoting our religious freedom. To this end, pastors will be provided with Homily points and sample intentions for the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful).
- Parishes are also encouraged to dedicate to this same intention any of their regularly scheduled **devotions** (e.g., Holy Hour, Rosary, etc.) that take place during the Fortnight.
- All diocesan and affiliated organizations are encouraged to make use of the **“prayer for religious liberty”** at their meetings during the Fortnight.

LEARNING

- A brief (10-minute) PowerPoint **presentation** has been created to highlight the principles of “Our First, Most Cherished Freedom” (the USCCB document).
- Two **public seminars** are scheduled for the Saturday mornings of the Fortnight (June 23 and 30) and hosted at the institutions of Catholic higher education in the diocese (Alvernia University and DeSales University). The format for these events includes the common presentation on the USCCB document, a panel discussion, an open forum, the prayer for liberty, and an opportunity to participate in the petition/letter signing drive (see below). Panelists for these seminars will include academic experts (an historian, a theologian, and a lawyer).
- Five **catechetical talks** are scheduled during the week of June 24-30. To take place in a parish setting in each deanery of the diocese, these events will include the common presentation on the USCCB document, a talk by a local attorney and/or local pastor, the prayer for liberty, and an opportunity to participate in the petition/letter signing drive (see below). Events will be organized and promoted through the local councils of the Knights of Columbus. Presenters will be drawn from the diocesan St. Thomas More Society.
- Catechesis on the subject of religious freedom will also take place at **meetings of diocesan organizations** that occur before or during the Fortnight (i.e., the Lehigh Valley chapter of Legatus on June 6, the quarterly meeting of the Catholic Business Owners Alliance on June 7, and the membership meeting of the St. Thomas More Society on June 21).
- **Resources** for continuing education about religious freedom will be made available on the campaign’s web site.

PUBLIC ACTION

- Throughout the Fortnight, the diocesan Commission for Women will sponsor a **petition/letter signing drive**. Materials will be physically available at parishes throughout the diocese on the two weekends during the Fortnight. Where possible, they will also be available at the educational events. And an electronic version will be made available through the campaign's website. Results of the signature drive will be delivered to the appropriate legislators.
- The signature event of the campaign will be the **RINGING OF BELLS** throughout the Diocese, to take place **on Wednesday, July 4th at Noon**. Any/all individuals and institutions within the five-county geographic area of the Diocese are invited to join the bell-ringing this Independence Day to show support for religious freedom as "our first, most cherished liberty."

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