

Knights of Columbus Urges Prayer in Run-Up to Election

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Novena will be addressed to Mary, the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the U.S.

NEW HAVEN, Conn. - As the election nears, the Knights of Columbus is urging its members and other Catholic Americans to pray.

The prayer will be in the form of a novena - nine consecutive days of prayer - and will run from Oct. 30 to the eve of the election on Nov. 7.

The prayer is addressed to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, under her title of the Immaculate Conception.

Individuals, families, councils and parishes are all invited to participate.

"The Church teaches that Catholics are called to form their consciences based on Church teaching and vote in accordance with that well-formed conscience," said Knights of Columbus CEO Carl Anderson. He added: "Pope Francis has said in reference to the U.S. election that we should 'study the proposals well, pray and choose with your conscience,' and this novena is designed to help Catholic Americans do that."

The text of the novena reads:

Most Holy Trinity: Our Father in Heaven, who chose Mary as the fairest of your daughters; Holy Spirit, who chose Mary as your Spouse; God the Son, who chose Mary as your Mother, in union with Mary we adore your majesty and acknowledge your supreme, eternal dominion and authority.

Most Holy Trinity, we put the United States of America into the hands of Mary Immaculate in order that she may present the country to you. Through her we wish

to thank you for the great resources of this land and for the freedom which has been its heritage.

Through the intercession of Mary, have mercy on the Catholic Church in America. Grant us peace. Have mercy on our president and on all the officers of our government. Grant us a fruitful economy, born of justice and charity. Have mercy on capital and industry and labor. Protect the family life of the nation. Guard the precious gift of many religious vocations. Through the intercession of our Mother, have mercy on the sick, the tempted, sinners - on all who are in need.

Mary, Immaculate Virgin, our Mother, Patroness of our land, we praise you and honor you and give ourselves to you. Protect us from every harm. Pray for us, that acting always according to your will and the will of your divine Son, we may live and die pleasing to God. Amen.

In 1791, America's first bishop, John Carroll, entrusted his diocese (which encompassed the entire country) to the Blessed Mother, and in 1846, the bishops of the United States reaffirmed that dedication, declaring Mary as patroness of the United States under her title of the Immaculate Conception.

The prayer was composed for the 1959 dedication of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception - which includes the "Knights Tower." The prayer received its imprimatur from Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle, who was then archbishop of Washington.

More information is available at www.kofc.org/novena

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