

National Prayer Breakfast Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,
we are created in your image and endowed by you with dignity and freedom. We praise and thank you for these gifts so fundamental to our humanity, gifts that have been redeemed and purified by your Son's death and Resurrection.

Even as we give you thanks, O Father, we also beseech your compassion for millions of people the world over who suffer religious persecution and discrimination. Grant us in your mercy the courage to raise our voices in their defense and the wisdom to defend your gifts of freedom and dignity well and wisely. Bless those who are striving to defend religious freedom in the United States, whether in the public square or the courtroom, the legislature or the classroom or in the model of works of mercy inspired by faith.

In this hour of many challenges to religious freedom, at home and abroad, we give you thanks for the witness of Cardinal Sarah who has graced us with his presence and with his insights. Bless him in his dedicated service to your Holy People. Send your blessing upon Speaker Ryan, Sr. Constance and the Little Sisters of the Poor, and also upon those who organized and sponsored this prayer breakfast, most especially, if I may say so O Lord, the Knights of Columbus and its Supreme Knight Carl Anderson.

Pour forth your Holy Spirit upon all government officials that they may strive to end religious persecution abroad and uphold religious freedom in laws, policies, and regulations at all levels of government. Likewise, O Father, we ask you to enlighten us as citizens and strengthen our virtue that we may work to elect leaders and enact laws that reflect the wisdom and love with which you have created us.

Finally, in this month of May, we invoke the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary under her title of Our Lady of Guadalupe. O Mary, when you appeared to Juan Diego in 1531, you opened the floodgates of evangelization in the New World. Show yourself again to us, O Virgin of Tepeyac and intercede for us that we may have grace and

charity so necessary to re-evangelize our culture that it might respect the gift of life and our fundamental freedoms, and thus become a civilization of truth and love. Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!