



May 27, 2026  
*St. Augustine of Canterbury*

Dear Fathers, Deacons, Consecrated Religious, Religious Educators, Knights of Columbus and faithful of the North Country:

As you know, in preparation for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Bishops of the United States have decided to Consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This Consecration will take place on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> while we are gathering at our Conference's summer meeting in Orlando. In preparation for the Consecration, I encourage each of us to pray a Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus beginning on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Novena Prayer is available at: [Consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus | USCCB](#).

The USCCB website has a number of great resources for ways of praying for our country in celebration of 250 years as a nation, including 250 Works of Mercy and 250 hours in Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. Additional information, including a diocesan resource page, will be made available soon. Until then, each parish, each of the faithful, is encouraged to celebrate this historic event beginning with the Novena.

Please find below excerpts from a prayer for the nation composed in 1791 by Archbishop John Carroll, the first Bishop of the United States. The Archbishop instructed the parish in his diocese to recite the prayer at all the Masses. In preparation for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, please join in prayer for our troubled nation.

Thank you for your faith-filled citizenship as together we pray for our ***One Nation, Under God!***

Christ's Peace be yours,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg

## **Excerpts from the 1791 prayer by Archbishop John Carroll**

*We pray O God of might, wisdom and justice, through whom authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment decreed, assist with your Holy Spirit of counsel and fortitude the president of these United States, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness and be eminently useful to your people over whom he presides; by encouraging due respect for virtue and religion; by a faithful execution of the laws in justice and mercy; and by restraining vice and immorality...*

Archbishop Carroll went on to say:

*Let the light of your divine wisdom direct the deliberations of Congress, and shine forth in all the proceedings and laws framed for our rule and government, so that they may tend to the preservation of peace, the promotion of national happiness, the increase of industry, sobriety and useful knowledge; and may perpetuate to us the blessing of equal liberty...*

*We recommend likewise, to your unbounded mercy, all our brethren and fellow citizens throughout the United States, that they may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of your most holy law; that they may be preserved in union, and in that peace which the world cannot give.*