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## Focus on Religious Freedom

[www.cffor.org](http://www.cffor.org)

### U.S. Catholic Bishops Designate Religious Freedom Week: June 22-29

Each year, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) observes Religious Freedom Week. It begins on June 22, the feast day of SS Thomas More and John Fisher, two English martyrs who fought religious persecution in the early 16th century. The week includes the Nativity of St. John the Baptist on June 24 and ends on June 29, the feast of SS Peter and Paul, two apostles martyred in Rome.

The theme chosen for this year is *Solidarity in Freedom*. "Solidarity means much more than engaging in sporadic acts of generosity. It means thinking and acting in terms of community." <sup>(1)</sup> The Bishops invite all "to pray, reflect and act to promote religious freedom." <sup>(2)</sup> The USCCB offers resources for each day focusing on different areas of religious freedom at [www.usccb.org/ReligiousFreedomWeek](http://www.usccb.org/ReligiousFreedomWeek)

***"It's the duty of everyone to defend religious freedom and promote it for all people."*** - Pope Francis

*(Fratelli tutti, 116 (1); catholicphilly.com(2); aleteai.org, 6/3/21; 1.cbn.com, 6/6/21(3); toddstarnes.com, 6/7/21(5); Tinker v. DesMoines 1969(4))*

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#### **Happening Now: A Victory! 2nd Grader Will be Allowed to Read Bible During Recess**

A second grader in Illinois who liked to sometimes read her Bible both silently and aloud during recess had it taken away when her teacher said, "You can't be doing that." <sup>(3)</sup>

Her parents reached out to American Center for Law & Justice (ACLJ) who wrote a letter to the district explaining a Supreme Court ruling that "students do not shed their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse gates..." <sup>(4)</sup> "We're happy to report that after reading our letter, the school thanked us for educating them and removed all restrictions on Gabrielle's reading," the ACLJ reported. <sup>(5)</sup>