

Mission Intention

FEBRUARY

2020 - 2021

Education for
Community Life

Country Focus: Iceland

Pope Francis' February Prayer Intention

We pray for women who are victims of violence, that society will listen to their sufferings and protect them.

Iceland is one of the most peaceful, and safest nations for women, according to the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security. This is attributed in part to the country's long history of democracy and commitment to equality in healthcare and education for all of its citizens. Iceland was even the first country in the world to elect a female president.

About half the size of Minnesota, Iceland is an island nation, lying northwest of the United Kingdom between the Greenland Sea and North Atlantic Ocean. The name does not mean the island is all ice, only 11% is ice and it has pleasant summers.

According to the Diocese of Reykjavik, Irish monks are believed to have been the first settlers of Iceland, and Christianity has been the national religion since the year 1000. After the Reformation, in the late 1500's, Catholicism was made illegal

for several centuries, but in the 1800's, the Roman Catholic Church was reestablished. The Diocese of Reykjavik was founded in 1968, and in the year 2000, to celebrate 1,000 years of Christianity in Iceland, its cathedral, the Cathedral of Christ the King, was given the title of "Basilica." It is the only Basilica in Northern Europe.

As the Church in Iceland continues to share the Gospel, let us join the Holy Father in prayer this month and pray for the safety of women everywhere.



Saint Spotlight: Saint Monica



For many centuries, women all over the world have sought the intercession of Saint Monica. The patron saint of married women and mothers, Saint Monica is known for her strong faith and perseverance in prayer.

Saint Monica was born in the 4th century in what is now the country of Algeria, in Northern Africa. Although she was raised in a Christian family, she was given in marriage to someone who practiced paganism. While her husband, Patricius, did not share Saint Monica's faith, he did not try to prevent her from worshipping Jesus. Through Saint Monica's prayers and example, Patricius finally converted to Christianity, and was baptized one year before he died.

Saint Monica also spent many years praying for the conversion of her oldest son, Augustine. He had rejected his mother's Catholic faith, choosing instead a life of indulgence and excess. Saint Monica almost gave up hope that her son would ever be converted, until she had a dream in which God told her Augustine would eventually return to the faith. Not only did Saint Monica keep praying and fasting for him after this dream, she followed him to Rome and then Milan so she could remain close to him. In Milan, she met Saint Ambrose, who was then Bishop of Milan. He became Saint Monica's spiritual director and converted Saint Augustine, shortly before Saint Monica's death.

We celebrate Saint Monica each year on August 27, one day before her son Saint Augustine's feast day.



CENTER for MISSION

Society for the Propagation of the Faith / St. Paul and Minneapolis

Promoting Knowledge
of Faith

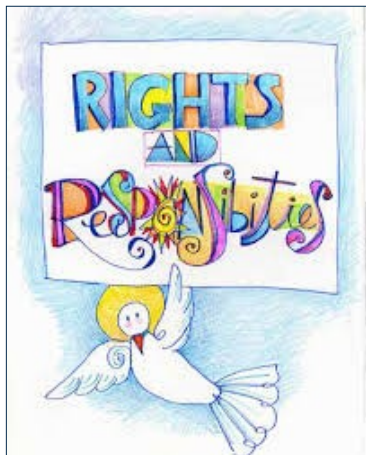
God's Word for Mission

"Open your mouth on behalf of the mute, and for the rights of the destitute; open your mouth, judge justly, defend the needy and the poor!" (Proverbs 31:8-9)

"Make justice your aim: redress the wronged, hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow" (Isaiah 1:17).

"As for the State...It also has the duty to protect the rights of all its people, and particularly of its [more vulnerable] members, the workers, women and children" (Saint John XXIII, Christianity and Social Progress, no. 20).

Rights and Responsibilities



Brother Mickey McGrath, OSFS

All people have the right to a life of dignity, because each of us was made in the image and likeness of God. But in addition to those rights, the Catholic Church teaches that we also have responsibilities, namely, to make sure that all people have access to those things that are needed to live a dignified life. This is explained further in the Catholic Social Teaching theme of “Rights and Responsibilities.”

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops teaches, “...human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met...Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities—to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.” This means that just as we all have the right to a life of dignity, we also have a duty and responsibility to ensure that

all others have this same right. Part of this responsibility includes working with governments to make sure all citizens “have the means necessary for the proper development of life” (St. John XXIII, Peace on Earth, no. 11). Not only do people have the right to the basic necessities needed to sustain life, like food, water, healthcare and clothing, they also have the right to participate in society, the right to freedom of religion, and the right to live in peace and safety.

In this month’s video, we will learn more about the responsibilities we have toward one another. As you watch the video, think about what responsibilities you are being called to in order to protect others’ rights, particularly as it relates to this month’s prayer petition. What are some needs in your neighborhood? School? Community? How can you help address those needs?

CRS 101: Rights and Responsibilities [Click Here>>](#)

1. The video states, “We are required to have more than existence.” What does this mean to you?
2. Why do rights also come with responsibilities?
3. Why does the Church teach that we have a responsibility to one another?
4. What can you do to make sure others’ rights are being met?

CST 101 Rights and Responsibilities



Mission Petitions

- ✚ Let us pray that through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, all Catholics will work together to find ways to reflect the image of God in each of us.
- ✚ Let us pray for those in government, that they may help create societies where all citizens know their full dignity and value.
- ✚ Let us pray that God will grant us the eyes to see those who need us to walk with them in times of suffering.
- ✚ Let us pray for those who feel alone in their suffering, that they may experience deeply God’s mercy and healing.

Heavenly Father,

We ask you to give your love and protection to all, especially women, as we join Pope Francis in prayer this month. We ask you for courage and strength to speak up for the vulnerable, and justice and healing for those who have been hurt. We pray this in your Son’s name. Amen.