

Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7193 of May 5, 1999

The President

National Day of Prayer, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

From our earliest days, whether in times of joy or of challenge, Americans have raised their hearts and voices in prayer. On the Great Plains, American Indians prayed for peace and for blessings upon their children and their friends. The Pilgrims prayed from the moment they first set foot on this continent. Our Nation’s founders prayed as they forged a democracy based on freedom and respect for human rights. Our military leaders and the millions of men and women who have served in our Armed Forces have prayed in the midst of every conflict in which our Nation has fought. And so it continues to this day, as Americans of every race, background, and creed pray in churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, and their own homes for guidance, wisdom, and courage in confronting the challenges before us.

We can pray openly thanks to the religious freedom guaranteed for us by the First Amendment to the Constitution. That freedom and the diversity of faiths it has fostered are among America’s most important achievements. They have made our Nation a beacon for generations of people from around the world who have traveled here seeking to worship according to their conscience without fear of coercion or constraint.

On this National Day of Prayer, observed so soon after the tragedy in Littleton, Colorado, and the tornadoes that devastated communities in Kansas, Texas, and Oklahoma, we are more keenly aware than ever of the power and solace we find in prayer. Throughout the days that have followed the deaths of and injury to so many of our fellow citizens, Americans have united in prayer for those who died or were harmed, for the comfort and peace of their families, for the wisdom to heal our society, and for the strength to overcome such tragedies. For as Martin Luther King, Jr., so eloquently said, “When our days become dreary with low-hovering clouds of despair, and when our nights become darker than a thousand midnights, let us remember that there is a creative force in this universe . . . a power that is able to make a way out of no way and transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows.”

The Congress, by Public Law 100–307, has called on our citizens to reaffirm the role of prayer in our society and to honor the religious diversity our freedom permits by recognizing annually a “National Day of Prayer.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 6, 1999, as a National Day of Prayer. I encourage the citizens of this great Nation to pray, each in his or her own manner, seeking strength from God to face the problems of today, requesting guidance for the uncertainties of tomorrow, and giving thanks for the rich blessings that our country has enjoyed throughout its history.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William Clinton

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