

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 16, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER, 1976

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

In this Bicentennial year, we will often reflect on the events of 200 years ago. As we recall the crises of those early days, let us also reflect on the profound faith in God which inspired the founding fathers.

As the events of 1776 unfolded, our forebears knew they were on an uncertain course. On March 16 of that year, the Continental Congress, recognizing the "impending calamity and distress," asked each colony "publicly to acknowledge the over-ruling Providence of God," and urged the Colonists to observe a designated Friday in May as a day of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer."

When later that year, the signers of the Declaration of Independence pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, the pledge was made "with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence."

In conformity with a Congressional request (66 Stat. 64), it is especially appropriate this year that a day be set aside to reaffirm the commitment of our first citizens and draw on the "solemn sense of God's superintending Providence" that sustained them during those troubled times.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 14, 1976, as National Day of Prayer, 1976.

I call upon all Americans to pray that day, each in his or her own way, for the strength to meet the challenges of the future with the same courage and dedication Americans showed the world two centuries ago.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundredth.

GERALD R. FORD

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