



Focus on Religious Freedom

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"The happy union of these states is a wonder; their Constitution is a miracle; their example the hope of liberty throughout the world." - James Madison

Celebrating Constitution Week, September 13-19, in All Schools

"The U.S. Constitution stands as a testament to the tenacity of Americans throughout history to maintain their liberties, freedoms and inalienable rights." ⁽¹⁾ In 1956, the Daughters of the American Revolution started the celebration of the Constitution adopted by Congress. Then, in 2004, Sen. Robert Byrd, correctly believing that American school children lacked significant knowledge regarding the Constitution, proposed an amendment, passed by Congress, requiring that all educational institutions receiving federal funds implement educational programs relating to the U.S. Constitution on Sept. 17 every year, celebrating the signing of the Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787.

This Constitution is the world's longest surviving written charter of government with its first 3 words, "We the People", affirming that the government of these United States exists to serve its citizens. "...its framers wisely separated and balanced governmental powers to safeguard the interests of majority rule and minority rights, of liberty and equality, and of the state and federal governments." ⁽²⁾

"To prevent the abuses of power they felt under the British monarchy, the Founding Fathers framed the Constitution carefully, distributing power over three branches of government, outlining its powers, limitations on those powers, and the rights of citizens." ⁽³⁾ The three branches were to have equal powers, called "checks and balances." "Powers not assigned to one of the three branches are left to the individual states." ⁽⁴⁾

Some of the original delegates from the states were troubled that the original Constitution lacked a description of individual rights. In 1791, Americans added the first 10 Amendments known as the Bill of Rights. The first and foundational right is: **"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; ..."** ⁽⁵⁾

(dar.org(1); ciis.edu(2)(5); nationalday.com(3)(4); trinitydc.edu; uscode.house.gov.; Constitution of the United States

Remembering September 11, 2001

We pray, especially today, for those killed in the attack on our city, country and liberties. We pray for comfort for their loved ones as a nation still grieving the loss of each one of them. Let our lives reflect respect and appreciation for the liberties they had no chance to defend that day.

If the liberties they lived are to prevail, each generation must be taught the bedrock of our liberties is inalienable rights from our Creator. The natural rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness guided our founders to construct a Constitution written for "ages and millions yet unborn" ...a Constitution not bounded by culture or by technology but by the immutable nature of man and his reliance on God.

Those Americans who died on Sept. 11, 2001, lived in the freedom to follow their faith or to choose no faith. They were not forced to behave or worship according to the dictates of any government. They were not subject to an all-powerful culture or government selecting winners and losers, rich and poor, respected and vilified. We honor them by living those freedoms and insuring them for their loved ones

As we remember the joy of their lives and the anguish of their loss, we pray for the repose of their souls in the comforting arms of the Savior of us all. May they rest in peace and may we protect and preserve the liberties for which they were so grievously attacked.