

# **Pope's prayer intention for April: 'For fundamental human rights'**

**Pope Francis releases his prayer intention for the month of April 2021, and urges everyone to pray for those fighting to protect people's fundamental human rights in all parts of the world. - By Devin Watkins**

**"Defending fundamental human rights demands courage and determination."**

**Pope Francis begins "The Pope Video" for April with this remark, and goes on to describe exactly what he means.**

**He says he is referring to "actively combatting poverty, inequality, the lack of work, land and housing, and the denial of social and labor rights."**

**As a press release from the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network points out, the Pope is inviting all people of goodwill to pray for those who "risk their lives fighting for fundamental rights."**

## **Risking life and limb for others**

**In the video, the Pope laments that human rights are often not equal for all, saying there are "first-, second-, and third-class people, and those who are disposable."**

**Yet, he appeals, fundamental human rights "must be equal for all."**

**“In some places, defending people’s dignity can mean going to prison, even without a trial. Or it might mean slander,” he notes.**

**Despite the danger, says Pope Francis, “every human being has the right to develop fully, and this fundamental right cannot be denied by any country.”**

**With this in mind, the Pope urges everyone to pray during April for this intention.**

**“Let us pray for those who risk their lives while fighting for fundamental rights under dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and even in democracies in crisis, that they may see their sacrifice and their work bear abundant fruit.”**

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## **Inherent human rights**

**The press release accompanying the video points out that the images which form a background to the Pope’s words “seek to reflect the exercise of these fundamental rights... and the abuse of these same rights.”**

**It notes that “fundamental human rights” refer to “rights that belong to all people, basically for the very fact that they exist as human beings.”**

**Those rights, it adds, were first laid down at an international level in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.**

## Lamentable inequality

Fr. Frédéric Fornos, S.J., who heads up the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network which produces the monthly video, recalls that Pope Francis has often spoken up against the basic inequalities which people face, as some live in opulence while others see their rights trampled upon.

Pope Francis, he says, is urging us in April to remember those who face prison, danger, or death to stand up for people's rights, whether in dictatorships, authoritarian regimes, or in some democracies in crisis.

"Many of them [do so] in the name of their faith in Jesus Christ," says Fr. Fornos. "Let us not forget them; let us pray for them."

The full text of the Pope's prayer intention is below:

- *Defending fundamental human rights demands courage and determination.*
- *I'm referring to actively combatting poverty, inequality, the lack of work, land and housing, and the denial of social and labor rights. Often, in practice, fundamental human rights are not equal for all. There are first-, second-, and third-class people, and those who are disposable.*
- *No. They must be equal for all.*
- *In some places, defending people's dignity can mean going to prison, even without a trial. Or it might mean slander. Every human being has the right to develop fully, and this fundamental right cannot be denied by any country.*



*Let us pray for those who risk their lives while fighting for fundamental rights under dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and even in democracies in crisis, that they may see their sacrifice and their work bear abundant fruit.*