

How I'm Praying for Justice

Amy Coney Barrett

After watching the tense confirmation hearings for Amy Coney Barrett, we learned that 1) she is a devoted mother of seven children; 2) she and her husband shared homeschooling duties during the pandemic; 3) she can explain constitutional law and legal precedent without the aid of notes; and 4) she can remain calm while politicians try to dissect her with loaded questions.

She's brilliant, poised, dignified, articulate and able to maintain her composure under pressure. And yet she's been called a "racist" and a "colonizer" because she and her husband adopted two children from Haiti, and "dangerous" because she has attended pro-life events. She was also described as a "nut" on Sept. 25 by atheist commentator Bill Mayer—because Barrett is a charismatic Catholic who believes in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Mayer's rude comment (it was accompanied by the worst profanity) proves that the media elite and the political establishment believe Christians should be automatically disqualified from holding office or a judicial appointment. It also reveals the kind of vicious animosity that is aimed at people of faith who dare to step into the public arena today.

Now that Amy Coney Barrett has been confirmed to Supreme Court, she needs our prayers. Here's how I'm praying:

1. **Pray for protection for her family.** Barrett and her husband of 20 years, Jesse, decided early in their marriage to have a large family. Their children are Emma, 19; Tess and Vivian, both 16; John Peter, 13; Liam, 11; Juliet, 9; and Benjamin, 8. Vivian and John Peter were adopted from Haiti, and Benjamin has Down

Syndrome. Barrett had said in past interviews that she believes raising children is the best way she can make a significant impact on the world.

Barrett is the first sitting Supreme Court justice to have school-age children, which means she is wading into uncharted territory. In late September a professor at Boston University accused Barrett of racism, calling her a “white colonizer” who uses her Haitian kids as “props.” Pray for a shield of protection around the Barrett children so they won’t be traumatized by their mother’s critics.

2. Pray that her faith will remain strong. Barrett’s father, Mike Coney, is a strong Catholic who attended a Life in the Spirit seminar during the early days of the Catholic charismatic movement. He was baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. He told the *National Catholic Register* about that day: “I was filled with an insatiable appetite for reading Scripture and spiritual books. Making time for personal prayer became important. I sensed a call from the Lord to serve.”

Coney raised his seven children (Amy is the oldest) in a Catholic charismatic community called People of Praise. Today, Barrett still holds to her charismatic Catholic faith, even after attending law school at Notre Dame and becoming a federal judge in 2017. She has recently served as a women’s leader in her church.

Critics have attacked Barrett because the Christian school her children attend in South Bend, Indiana, has a policy that doesn’t allow LGBTQ teachers on its staff. That policy, of course, is legal in this country because churches and religious organizations can’t be forced to hire people who don’t agree with their teachings. But the Supreme Court will likely confront this crucial issue again soon. Pray that Barrett will always uphold religious freedom, and that she will rely on God’s wisdom to judge difficult cases.

3. **Pray that she will defend unborn life.** Amy Coney Barrett is only the fifth woman in U.S. history to sit on the Supreme Court. You would think everybody would be celebrating that landmark, but many feminists have opposed Barrett since President Trump nominated her because they expect her to jeopardize access to abortion.

It's fascinating that a mother of young children now sits on the bench—and not only a mother of her own biological children but also a mother of adopted children and of a son with special needs. In some countries, pregnancies are automatically terminated if a woman is pregnant with a Down Syndrome child. Is America headed in that direction? Or could Barrett help us navigate a new path that respects both the rights of women and their unborn children?

Perhaps Barrett has been uniquely positioned to demonstrate Christian compassion for those unborn citizens who are not considered “worthy” of life. Perhaps she will help our nation look at the issue of abortion from the perspective of a selfless mother—and not from that of an abortion clinic that harvests body parts for profit.

Perhaps Barrett will help us reframe the abortion debate, making it less about a woman's body and more about the unborn child who cannot stand on a street corner to protest injustice. Pray that our newest member of the Supreme Court will have the courage of Esther to defend those who have no voice. {eoa}