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Activists pose for a photo after a prayer vigil outside an ICE detention center Oct. 7 in Adelanto, California. The vigil was held to pray for immigrants detained there and to draw attention to alleged inhumane conditions inside the facility. (Courtesy of Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange)



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October 26, 2026

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Editor's note: *Global Sisters Report's Monday Starter is a feature from GSR staff writers that rounds up news from or about women religious that you may otherwise have missed.*

Monday Starter

Dozens of activists joined the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange and two other social justice groups Oct. 7 for an interfaith prayer vigil outside an ICE detention center where four detainees have died since January 2025 and organizers say inhumane conditions continue.

The vigil outside the Adelanto ICE Processing Center, in the California desert about two hours northeast of Los Angeles, was a collaborative effort between the sisters, Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, and the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights.

In July, in response to a lawsuit by detainees alleging inhumane conditions, including failure to provide clean drinking water, proper nutrition and adequate medical care, a federal judge ordered changes at the center. In addition to ordering access to clean drinking water, adequate food, free soap and hygiene products, the order mandated the facility be cleaned daily, and that detainees are provided blankets and temperature-appropriate clothing, [Cal Matters reported](#).

The order came in a preliminary injunction after detainees sued over conditions and the judge found they are "likely to prevail" in their case that their Fifth Amendment rights against inhumane conditions are being violated, the nonprofit news outlet said.

"We believe that every human life is sacred, regardless of immigration status. Families deserve to remain together, and no person in government custody should suffer or die because of neglect, inadequate care, or institutional irresponsibility," the sisters said in a press release announcing the vigil.

"We stand in solidarity with families harmed by cruel policies that have led to detention, deportation, and family separation. We affirm their God-given dignity and call for their freedom from detention as they process their immigration case."

Novenas ahead of US midterms

The mid-term elections in the United States are approaching fast, and several groups are preparing for the event with prayer.

Network Catholic social justice lobby is joining Catholics in Communion for a virtual election novena, which will be held every evening starting Nov. 1. The novena begins at 7:30 p.m. Eastern time and will not be recorded, but will have live Spanish interpretation.

Those who [register](#) will receive a Zoom link that is good for all nine sessions; participants can attend as many sessions as they are able. In addition to the prayer, which will utilize the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Novena for Faithful Citizenship," there will be election-related updates, opportunities to help ensure all votes are counted, and check-ins with local communities holding vigil across the country.

That novena comes on the heels of another one, hosted by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, that begins Oct. 26 and continues through Election Day, Nov. 3.

Each day, LCWR will post a 10-minute video prayer, which will include excerpts from the LCWR [Declaration of Commitment](#), petitions, and prayers for the safety of candidates, voters, and election officials.

The prayer will be posted daily on the LCWR website and be available for use at any time.

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Anti-death penalty awards

The anti-death penalty group Catholic Mobilizing Network presented its biennial awards Oct. 22, honoring capital punishment opponents just a week after the Trump Administration announced it would not live stream a federal execution by firing squad, and three weeks after a botched execution in Tennessee left a woman in critical condition when two attempts to end her life by lethal injection failed.

Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul S. Coakley received the Archbishop Fiorenza Dignity & Life Award, and The Atlantic staff writer Elizabeth Bruenig received the Justice Reimagined Award.

Held at the Vatican Embassy in Washington, D.C., the event featured remarks from Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, apostolic nuncio to the United States, and renowned anti-death penalty advocate and author Sr. Helen Prejean, who said Catholic Mobilizing Network's most important work is ensuring the American public knows what is happening.

"People are good, they just don't reflect deeply, and how can they reflect unless witnesses come to them?" Prejean said, according to the group's press release. "And that's the work of the Catholic Mobilizing Network."