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Sr. Eilis McCulloh with other Sisters of the Humility of Mary at the No Kings Day march on June 14, 2025, in Youngstown, Ohio (Eilis McCulloh)



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The final part of my community's mission statement reads:

> To fulfill our mission, we commit ourselves, with the Church, as individuals, and as a community to:
>
> *embrace the diversity of all peoples;*
>
> *work with others to proclaim the Gospel message;*
>
> *use our resources to meet needs, especially those of people who are poor; and*
>
> *do justice.*

For the past several months, those final two words have echoed in my prayer. What does it mean for us to *do justice* today?

Here in the United States, we have been on the receiving end of the firehose of executive orders, massive cuts at the hands of the Department of Government Efficiency, a budget reconciliation process threatening to take away vital programs, terrifying immigration raids, and so much more. Our families, our friends, our communities and the very people we have vowed to journey alongside are hurting. Too often, it feels unbearable.

But there is also something beautiful happening in the midst of much upheaval — of our democracy, of our communities and of our world. I've been reminded of this numerous times over the past few weeks. I don't want to seem Pollyanna-ish, because the terrifying reality is unfolding before our very eyes. But we are not alone in the struggle.

We, sisters, associates, partners in mission, friends, and allies are showing up — from the "Hands Off!" rallies in April to the No Kings Day just a few weeks ago — and we are speaking out. At the No Kings Day, I joined a number of my Humility of Mary sisters and associates in Youngstown, Ohio. We wore shirts with our logo reminding

people that we're about "More Abundant Life for All" and "Upholding the US Constitution."

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Because I am usually participating in these events in Washington, D.C., it was special to stand alongside my community in my hometown while calling for more abundant life for all people.

At risk here in the United States is access to health care for more than 16 million people and food assistance for millions of children and families. Additionally, while some members of Congress threaten to take health care and food away from so many, they want to give this money to the detention and deportation machine so that they can deport 1 million people per year. This is inhumane and will decimate our neighborhoods.

This is not the time for us, as women of faith, to stay silent. This is a time for us to go to the margins, to be on the margins, and to truly hear our neighbors. It is time for us to say, "Not on my watch."

Our faithful witness was not limited to No Kings or any other pop-up vigil or rally across the country.

On June 24, more than 250 sisters, associates, partners, and friends gathered on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., as part of Sisters Speak Out. Our tagline: "Catholic Sisters. Bold Witness. Faithful Resistance."



Humility of Mary Sr. Eilis McCulloh speaks to sisters on June 25, 2025, during the Sisters Speak Out event in Washington, D.C. (Courtesy of Eilis McCulloh)

On that day, we were calling for economic and immigrant justice. Under the scorching sun, we prayed and spoke truth to power about the injustices facing the people we care most about. But we weren't alone in our calling out. Across the country, there were more than 40 echo events — such as a vigil outside Eloy Detention Center in Arizona, and events in Orange, California, and New York — we were saying, "Not on my watch."

And, yet, among all the crowds was a palpable joy and hope. This is what we can accomplish when we come together — when we see ourselves as part of the whole — and when we know that we are not alone in the struggle.

In the hard days when there's another order that jeopardizes the people I care most about or a budget reconciliation that will decimate communities, hospitals and people across the country, I struggle to cling to that hope. I struggle to not let myself get bogged down by what feels like a never-ending barrage of policies and hatred

and anger.

We cannot give up. We must cling to hope.