

1 King John had succeeded to the English throne on the death of his brother, King Richard the Lionheart. John was not a good king, and he abused his powerful position.

2 A group of barons produced a charter (a document), listing what their rights should be, laying down that the king was not to abuse his power and authority in future.

3 The “Magna Carta”, as it was called, was signed on this day in 1215. Although King John was reluctant to sign it, the Magna Carta was confirmed by later kings and parliaments. One of its main points is that rulers themselves must live within the law - they are not above it.

4 One of the phrases in the Magna Carta, the ‘Great Charter’, reads:

*“To no-one  
will we sell or deny or delay  
right or justice.”*

People were only to be condemned on clear evidence and through a proper trial - things we now take for granted.

5 The Magna Carta also stated that taxes were not to be raised without the consent of those who represent the people, and the Church was to be free from government control.

6 *Let us think and pray:*

Let us pray for individuals who suffer under those who abuse power and people. Let us pray for the defenceless who are treated unfairly and who do not receive justice.

Lord, in your mercy - **hear our prayer.**

7 Let us pray for all rulers, that they appreciate that they are called to serve for the benefit of others.

Lord, in your mercy - **hear our prayer.**

8 Let us pray for our own members of parliament and the government elected by the nation. We pray that they may be people of integrity who govern justly and responsibly.

Lord, in your mercy - **hear our prayer.**

9 Let us pray for ourselves, that we may clearly distinguish good from evil, growing in integrity of character, developing a true sense of values.

Lord, in your mercy - **hear our prayer.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in  
*'Praying Each Day of the Year'*,  
a 3-volume book  
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine  
to research this topic further.

This material is part of  
the prayer and education website  
of the De La Salle Brothers  
in Great Britain:

[www.prayingeachday.org](http://www.prayingeachday.org)