

Proclaiming Corita Kent Day in Los Angeles County

Corita Kent, also known as Sister Mary Corita Kent, was a Roman Catholic religious sister, artist, educator, and social justice pioneer. She was born in Iowa on November 20, 1918, and joined the order of Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Los Angeles in 1936, where she taught and became the head of its arts department. She transformed the Immaculate Heart College into a creative enclave, encouraging her students to become engaged with the world outside of the classroom. She was a large part of the art, religious and secular communities in Los Angeles for decades, not only teaching and creating art, but making art accessible and affordable to the masses. A woman ahead of her time, her art and teachings were influenced by cultural, political, and religious themes, and she shared her ideas about faith, love, hope and justice. She challenged racial and economic inequality at home, protested the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, stood up for the rights of women and girls, and pushed the boundaries in the church and the art world.

Ms. Kent left the order in 1968 and moved to Boston, continuing to create and influence art. In all, she created several hundred serigraph designs for posters, book covers, and murals. One of her best known works was selected as a U.S. postage stamp in 1985: the word LOVE inscribed under bold strokes of color. Her art was used as

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**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
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banners and posters at civil rights and anti-war rallies, and she adorned the covers of *Newsweek* and *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Although she passed away in Massachusetts in 1986, Corita Kent and her art continue to influence new generations, not only through exhibits at major art institutions throughout the world, but through the Corita Art Center, located in Los Angeles, which maintains the largest and most comprehensive collection of her work. The Corita Art Center is dedicated to preserving and promoting Corita's artistic, educational, and social justice legacy, and as the steward for Corita's art, supports educational and public programs, serves as a resource about her life and work.

The impact of Corita Kent's work and her legacy continues to inspire artists, activists, and the community alike, and Los Angeles County residents should be reminded of her dedication to not only the people of Los Angeles County, but to everyone throughout the world.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Proclaim November 20, 2019 as "Corita Kent Day" throughout the County of Los Angeles, in celebration of world-renowned artist and social justice icon Corita Kent, and in honor of what would have been her 101st birthday; and

Encourage all to learn about her life, art, contributions, and legacy by visiting the Corita Art Center website at www.corita.org.

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