



THE DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON

September 12, 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As Election Day, November 6, 2012, is quickly approaching, I urge all the faithful in our Diocese of Charleston and all people of good will to pray, prepare and pledge to cast your vote this November. Voting is not only a treasured privilege, it is also a sacred duty; we are called as God's children to do all we can to promote the common good and participating in government by voting is a very important responsibility. During the month of September, voter registration drives will be held in many of our parishes and many education opportunities concerning the issues at hand will be offered.

When we vote, it is imperative that we do so with a well formed conscience and with sufficient knowledge of the implications of our vote. There are so many issues to consider, but we must prioritize those issues and vote for candidates who will honestly and courageously do what is best for our country, our state and local cities and towns. Our faith must influence our decisions, for God's law is the highest law.

In a doctrinal note about the participation of Catholics in political life, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith explains that "a well-informed Christian conscience does not permit one to vote for a political program or an individual law which contradicts the fundamental contents of faith and morals." The U.S. bishops concur, adding that "Decisions about candidates and choices about public policies require clear commitment to moral principles, careful discernment and prudential judgments based on the values of our faith" (Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility).

We are living in a time in which our God-given right to life, freedom of speech and freedom of religion are seriously threatened. As we study the issues we must remember that we can never support what is intrinsically evil. With the many issues to consider, none are more serious than the right to life, upholding the dignity of every human person and freedom to live our faith without government interference.

So please remember to register to vote and help with the voting efforts in your parishes and in your communities as the last day to register to vote in the November election is October 6, 2012. I am confident after prayer and careful preparation we can vote with purpose as informed Catholics, allowing the light of Christ to shine in a world that desperately needs it.

In the Lord's Peace,

Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmo
Bishop of Charleston

Office of the Bishop

119 Broad Street • Charleston, South Carolina 29401

Post Office Box 818 • Charleston, South Carolina 29402 • Phone (843) 853-2130 • Fax (843) 724-6387 • www.catholic-doc.org