



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
OF CHARLESTON
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This has been a difficult year. We are seven months into a pandemic and are preparing for elections in our country — all this, during one of the toughest times in our nation's history. However, we must not tire in our call to faithfully participate in civic life.

What is important for all of us to recognize, especially as Christians, is that we are not Republicans nor are we Democrats. We are Catholics first and foremost. We are one family in faith, and we have a responsibility to our nation and to our communities to seek the common good of all people. Our responsibility includes voting based on an informed conscience and our moral beliefs. We must research the issues and avoid any tendency towards favoring particular personalities or our own political bias. We must seek answers to sincere matters of policy, and find the truth buried in the daily assault of political rhetoric from every direction.

A year ago, my brother bishops and I issued a statement about the 2020 election. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops agreed that abortion was to remain the preeminent moral issue facing our nation. The word “preeminent” was a deliberate choice meant to indicate urgency as we perform our civic duty this November. While the Catholic Church has clear teaching on many important issues, we cannot advocate for important social changes if our nation does not have justice or peace for those in the womb.

I urge you, please do not stand idle. Engage in proper research, find out what the candidates stand for, and then vote. Each of us must take this very seriously and cast a ballot. A well-formed conscience in light of the Church's teaching means we vote not from insecurity or selfishness, but for love of our God, love of our nation, and love for the most vulnerable.

God bless you and your families. Let us pray for our nation and seek the intercession of the patroness of South Carolina, Our Lady of Joyful Hope.

In the Lord's in Peace,

Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmo
Bishop of Charleston