



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
**DIOCESE**  
**OF CHARLESTON**

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the month we celebrate Thanksgiving, we are provided many opportunities to remember the blessings in our lives. From our faith to our communities and country, we thank God for each of the gifts He has given us.

We, as Catholics and citizens, have the ability to vote and engage in civic life. It is a blessing that we can actively live our faith and a moral obligation to vote for those that defend the right to practice it.

As Americans prepare to step into the voting booth in early November, it is important to recognize, especially as Christians, that we do not only belong to a specific party — we are Catholic first. We belong to God who has made us one family in faith. We have responsibilities to our nation and communities to seek the common good of all people and promote dialogue in a world of differences.

It is imperative that we reflect on key principles as we seek to form our consciences before casting a ballot. We must weigh each candidate's stance on the moral hierarchy of issues rooted in Church teaching. Our political cause as Catholics is the defense and dignity of human life. We must elect lawmakers who uphold and promote the common good, reject intrinsically evil acts, and protect the weak, underserved, and vulnerable.

Catholics are called to proclaim the name of Christ Jesus the Lord to the world. While we work to prevent all acts that contradict or fail to recognize the God-given rights of every person, our votes must uphold the dignity of life from conception to natural death.

We do not vote from social pressure or selfishness, but from a well-formed conscience in light of the Church's teaching; we vote for love of one another which flows from God, the creator and giver of life.

May the Lord bless you and your families this Thanksgiving. Let us pray for our state and nation as we seek the intercession of the patroness of South Carolina, Our Lady of Joyful Hope.

In Christ's Love,

Most Reverend Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS  
*Bishop of Charleston*