

THOUGHTS FROM YOUR PASTOR: Election Day!

As you know, this Tuesday is Election Day, an important opportunity to take part in the civic life of our nation and local communities as part of being a citizen of our great Republic. Since the days our nation was founded during the American Revolution, we have had the privilege of being able to take part in the governance decisions that are made, as we strive as a society to live up to the ideals of the Declaration, which actually overlap the basics of Catholic social teaching: that all of us are created in the image and likeness of God, that humans have inherent dignity and worth, and that the purpose of any healthy governmental system is to protect that dignity.

These are great ideals, but, to be honest, recent circumstances and events within our nation's political sphere, not to mention the nadir to which political discourse has continually fallen in recent years, have made many people very discouraged and "turned off" to political life, news, and involvement. And this is certainly an understandable sentiment especially given the turmoil after the 2016 election, the high feelings on both sides surrounding the recent Judge Kavanaugh hearings, the life-threatening violence shown to members of both political parties, the name-calling, etc. It is tempting to say "to heck with it all" and to opt to stay home this Tuesday and avoid Election Day altogether.

However, our Catholic social teaching urges us as disciples of Jesus to remain actively involved in the "public square" no matter how discouraging it is. Jesus knew first-hand the difficulties of dealing with the political realities of His day, what with the competing interests of the Roman and Jewish leaders in His land of His day. Yet, He and His disciples persevered against the odds to witness to the Gospel and to human dignity even in the midst of a divisive and corrosive political climate. We are called to do the same. In fact, now more than ever, our society – and our Republic and her leaders – needs the clear witness of us as Christian disciples regarding the true role of government, the existence of God, the true dignity of the human person as made in the image and likeness of God, and that all laws must respect that dignity. If we Christians will not stand up to witness to these truths in the public square, then who will? Our mission is not easy, but vitally important.

To help us in our Christian call to be involved in the political and civic life of our nation and local communities, our Bishops have provided us with helpful guidance. The Ohio Bishops (collectively known as the "**Catholic Conference of Ohio**") have made available **several resources** on their website, which can be found at www.ohiocathconf.org. On this site, you will find the following items to use in your discernment regarding for whom to vote on Tuesday: **Making Moral Choices in Voting**, **Reflections on Choosing Political Candidates**, and **Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship**. I have also included in today's bulletin our Bishops' **Background Information on State Issue 1 - Drug and Criminal Justice Policies**, for your convenience. Please make use of these resources, pray, discern, and go to the polls this Tuesday to exercise your civic and discipleship duty to be involved in the life of our society!

Fr. Ferguson is available to help you with any questions or concerns you may have; please contact him at hamilton.college@outlook.com or at 419-634-2626.

THOUGHTS FOR OUR PARISH CHILDREN by "Jackie", the Pastor's Cat



Hi boys and girls! My name is "Jackie", and as you know, I am Father Ferguson's cat! I don't feel so well right now. You see, I went out trick-or-treating for Halloween. I dressed up as a black cat (since I already had the costume...). And I got lots and lots of treats: animal crackers and "Kit-Cat" bars. And, well, I disobeyed Father, and I ate them all at the same time. Oooh. My tummy is still not well. Kids, I learned a lesson: listen to your parents when they tell you not to eat too many sweets. I better go back to sleep. But I hope you have a "purr"-fect week!