



...repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God

Jesus' admonition regarding taxes holds true for voting as well. We have a duty as Catholics to participate in public life by voting. If there were basic principles that I would encourage you to consider in this voting season, it would be these:

- 1) Pray for our country and this election cycle
- 2) Study the candidates and issues, forming your conscience according to the mind of the Church
- 3) Vote

PRAY - The first need of our country is prayer. As we prayed the Rosary last weekend under the movement "America Needs Fatima", I believe we responded to Mary's request at Fatima in 1917 for prayer and penance. Mary warned at Fatima that if people did not repent through prayer and penance there would be a worse war coming than World War I. Sure enough, it happened. The Rosary in a special way brings about the peace that we need as human beings.

STUDY - Some think that their conscience is perfectly formed and that they are infallibly right in all their opinions. The saints would differ on this point. The saints knew that they were always in need of perfecting, of learning more about God and His ways. There is so much to learn from the wisdom of the Church, we cannot exhaust it. In a special way, the Social Doctrine needs to be studied, from *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII all the way down to the latest document of Pope Francis on Fraternal Brotherhood, just released in Assisi on October 3rd. As he writes:

Goodness, together with love, justice and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all; they have to be realized each day. It is not possible to settle for what was achieved in the past and complacently enjoy it, as if we could somehow disregard the fact that many of our brothers and sisters still endure situations that cry out for our attention. (11)

VOTE - Our Legislative Advocacy committee has built in a link to voter's registration into our website. Please register ASAP so that you can participate in this election. Your vote matters.

Let me close with a prayer for our election from the US Bishops:

*Lord God, as the election approaches,
we seek to better understand the issues and concerns that confront our city/state/country,
and how the Gospel compels us to respond as faithful citizens in our community.
We ask for eyes that are free from blindness
so that we might see each other as brothers and sisters,
one and equal in dignity,
especially those who are victims of abuse and violence, deceit and poverty.
We ask for ears that will hear the cries of children unborn and those abandoned,
Men and women oppressed because of race or creed, religion or gender.
We ask for minds and hearts that are open to hearing the voice of leaders who will bring us closer to your Kingdom.
We pray for discernment
so that we may choose leaders who hear your Word,
live your love,
and keep in the ways of your truth
as they follow in the steps of Jesus and his Apostles
and guide us to your Kingdom of justice and peace.
We ask this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*

Fr. Ed