

Homily based on the readings from November 8, 2024 (Philippians 3.17-4.1; Luke 16.1-8)

I am not sure whether any of you noticed, but apparently there was some sort of election this past week. Does anyone know what I am talking about? [Answer.] I am being somewhat facetious, of course. It would have been almost impossible for anyone – man, woman, or child – to have avoided the yard signs, the campaign flyers, the commercials, the social media posts, and the 24-hour news coverage. Even though much of the *activity* surrounding the election was nothing more than idle chatter, the election itself was fundamentally important to our country and, in fact, to the entire world.

Not everybody who is here this morning, of course, was eligible to vote. All of our students, I presume, are still too young – and there may also be some members of our community who are citizens of other countries. Nevertheless, those of us who are *able* to participate in the electoral process have a moral obligation to do so, and – perhaps more

importantly – to make informed decisions about the individuals and the issues that appear on the ballot.

Even though elections are often exhausting and even demoralizing, we should do our best to view them in a positive light – as opportunities for thanksgiving and for service to our country. In the words of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:

As Catholics and Americans, we are *blessed* to be able to participate in our nation's political and public life. ... Election seasons, therefore, should contain a sense of *gratitude* and *hope*.

Despite the frustrations we all feel with the political system, responsible voting is one of the principal ways we have of demonstrating our *patriotism*, in the truest sense of the word: the *love* we have for our country and for the people living in it.

This year's election, of course, is over – and most of the results have already been announced. Nevertheless, we must never lose sight of the

importance of remaining engaged in the public life of our country. On a basic level, that means paying attention to the issues that continue to shape our nation – to the actions of our elected leaders, to the specific pieces of legislation that are being put forward on our behalf. For our *students*, it is important to remember that one of the main reasons for going to school is so that you can become wise and well-informed voters. In other words, you have a special obligation to prepare yourselves to be responsible citizens – by studying disciplines such as history and civics, to be sure, but also literature, science, mathematics, and most importantly philosophy and theology.

On the other hand, it is possible to become *too* invested in the outcome of our elections – being elated beyond measure when our candidates are victorious or despondent when they lose. As in all things, we must submit ourselves and our country to the will of God, even when – especially when – events do not turn out as we would have wished. If the Children of Israel – God’s chosen people – could survive seventy

years of captivity in the Babylonian Empire, we can endure four years of a president or a governor from the opposing political party.

Every single one of us should be immensely grateful to live in what is – by any measure – the greatest country in the history of the world.

Nevertheless, we must always remember that our residence here is only temporary. As Saint Paul reminded us in our first reading, our *true* citizenship is in heaven. Although we must do whatever we can, while we dwell in the United States of America, to support the individuals and institutions of our republic, our true allegiance belongs to a far greater power – to a *Kingdom* and to a *King*. Unlike a president, we do not elect a king – instead, he chooses us. He chose us, in fact, before we were even born, and has already prepared a place for us within his royal palace. When the time comes, we must *all* be willing to set aside our earthly allegiances and to accept the eternal Lordship of our one *true* ruler, our Savior and Redeemer Jesus Christ.