

ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
OF CHARLESTON

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Nov. 3, 2024

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As election day is in just two days, I want to encourage all Catholic faithful in South Carolina to vote — both for the office of president as well as for local leadership. I want to share an experience that I and many others have witnessed at the ballot box and to offer a few words of reassurance and consideration.

Though this election is undoubtedly a source of anxiety and uncertainty for so many Americans, I believe that the way we behave, whether publicly or privately, is an opportunity for each of us to share the love of Christ and the respect that every person is due. Additionally, our treatment of others is a testament to where we are spiritually and socially in our local communities.

With joy I report that when I went to vote, I saw an outpouring of support for our first-time voters. Every time a young or newly registered man or woman would approach the voting booth, a volunteer would announce, “We have a first-time voter!” People in line applauded. I have heard that this is occurring at many locations in our state and nation. It is a reminder that we should all embrace our civic duties with gratitude and conviction to will the good for one another.

As Americans, we must stand firmly in union as a countersign to our divided nation. In political discourse, let us ensure that we are less concerned with winning arguments than we are with the health of our family relationships, particularly remembering the salvation of every person in our lives. This includes safeguarding our souls from sin and praying ardently for true peace, true justice and true order as it stems from the Triune Divinity.

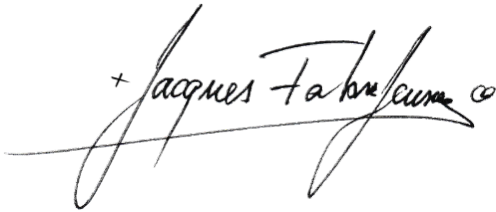
St. Gerard Majella said simply and so beautifully, “I see in my neighbor the person of Jesus Christ.” This is the mindset we must have as we cast our ballots. Remember, as Catholic Americans, we share our faith and our national identity. God has determined that we are here, now, *for a reason*. Let us join in prayer for an outcome that seeks to incentivize moral behavior and removes obstacles to freely living the tenants of our faith as citizens of the United States.

I urge you to draw your voting decisions based primarily on the teachings of the Universal Church. With the certainty of Christ, we can never go astray. Let us hold fast to his mission and his love for each of his children.

Go out, vote, and greet others with a spirit of joyful evangelization as we cast our votes.

“It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another” (Jn 15:16-17).

In Christ’s love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Jacques Fabre-Jeune" followed by a small circular mark.

Most Rev. Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS
Bishop of Charleston