

FROM THE PASTOR

My dear brothers and sisters,

This past Tuesday we had the primaries for New Hampshire. Sometimes we question whether or not our Faith has any importance in the political sphere. There are certainly plenty of people out there that say we need to keep our religion to ourselves and that it has no place in public life. The problem with this view is that we have a God who made everything and everyone. He has a loving plan for each person, for society and culture, and for the planet. God created each person and knows what will be best for him or her. To relegate God to the periphery is *idolatry* – it is to say that I am my own God, and, like Adam and Eve believed, I can determine all that is right and wrong, good and evil. Everything belongs to God; we are stewards of His Creation.

In the second reading today, St. Paul in writing to Timothy speaks of how we offer “**supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings**” for everyone, and then he specifically calls out “**kings and for all in authority**”. Political authority was not good to the early Christian Church, and it got worse for the next couple hundred years after St. Paul. Yet, St. Paul directed Timothy to pray for those in authority. Why?

We hear in the Gospel today how Jesus tells a parable of a steward who has squandered the property of his master... and he is finally caught. This temptation is there for everyone in power. Some are more tempted than others, but the temptation is there. Those in authority, especially political authority, are in constant need of our prayers and sacrifices offered to God. Without the strength of God, God’s grace and mercy, it is so easy for our leaders to focus more on their own personal or political gain than on the service to the people for which they were elected. While this would be bad enough for one soul (after all, what good is it to gain the whole world and to lose your soul?!), when one has political authority, this affects the constituents. The selfish decisions of leaders without regard for morality or the common good can lead to the destruction or collapse of a town, a state, a nation, or a whole society. This has happened plenty of times throughout the course of history (for instance, ancient Rome). Marxist philosophy rejected God. It rejected the inherent dignity of each person saying that if you were going to make an omelet, you had to break some eggs. They used this philosophy to exterminate millions. To put it lightly, when we take God out of our decisions, it leads to a big, big mess.

This then becomes the question for each of us: Is God central in all our decisions? Do the truths of our Faith form how we act, think, interact with each other? Are there areas of our lives that we say we should keep God out of: our recreation, our politics, our work, our bedrooms? The truth is, any place from which we decide to eject God, He *will* step away from. Do we really want God NOT to bless our homes, family, work and country? My personal opinion on this is that rejecting God and His Word is a big part of the reason why we are in the mess we are in today – God has said, “I have a tremendous blessing for you, but you have rejected it. I will not force it on you.” Don’t we so need His blessing and protection in our country, in our lives today?!

I invite you to do as St. Paul has directed us to do: to pray and sacrifice for our political leaders. It doesn’t matter on which part of the political spectrum you fall, all our leaders need our prayers. And remember this, whether you like them or not, they are NOT the enemy. Our true enemy is much more insidious: he is “**prowing around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour**” (I Peter 5:8). Our politicians need our prayers and sacrifices so that they can be the men and women of honor and integrity that we *need* them to be.

I also invite you to take a close look at your political views: are they in conformity with what we know our God has revealed to us of how He has created the universe and the dignity of each person? It is true that there is not a particular candidate or party stands for all we believe in as a people of Faith. We have a duty and obligation, therefore, to examine what our Faith teaches so that we can form our consciences to act politically in ways that work for the common good, respecting the dignity of each human person, and to contact our politicians to vote in ways that will build up the Kingdom of God, not tear it down.