



## DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE

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### OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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Message to the Faithful of the Diocese of Lafayette  
From Most Reverend J. Douglas Deshotel, Bishop of Lafayette  
On Faithful Citizenship

In a short time, our country will be entering an important election season. As faithful citizens of our country all of us are called to contribute and participate in the country we live in. The catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, "As far as possible, citizens should take an active part in public life." The Second Vatican Council in *Gaudium et Spes* declares, "One must pay tribute to those nations whose system permits the largest possible number of citizens to take part in public life in a climate of genuine freedom."

As citizens of the United States, we enjoy many benefits from the land we live in. Benefits that have been won by the sacrifices and hard work of those who have gone before us. We contribute to our society locally and nationally by actively participating in the public life of our society. The right to vote and freely elect those in authority should move us to work for the common good as much as we can. As the elections draw near, it is important for all of us to inform ourselves on the issues and candidates who are seeking office. The founding fathers of our nation stated many times that the greatest danger to a democracy is an uninformed citizenry.

As Catholics, we should vote for good laws and good lawmakers who contribute to the common good of our society. Our society is improved when laws protect the sanctity of the family, the building block of any stable country. Human life must be protected at all stages from conception to natural death. Resources should be available for those who are without the basics of human dignity; food, clothing, shelter, and education. A legal and humane pathway should be provided for those who immigrate to our country to escape oppression in their country. Our leaders should work to ensure a stable economy which provides employment and decent wages.

With the election season approaching, I urge all of us as faithful citizens to inform ourselves of the issues and candidates. Pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance as you work for the common good of our society.

Faithfully yours,

Most Reverend J. Douglas Deshotel, D.D.  
Bishop of Lafayette

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