



Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Office of the Cardinal
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

November 1, 2008

Dear Faithful People of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia,

As your Archbishop I wish to express to you my closeness in prayer as you prepare to exercise, next Tuesday, your right, privilege and responsibility to choose the next President of the United States as well as other national and local government leaders.

The issues facing our country in this election are many and complex. They include life itself, marriage and the family, discrimination, immigration, poverty, health care, war and peace, religious liberty and other serious concerns. As faithful citizens, we must all consider the issues as they affect not only ourselves and our own well-being but also those among us who are most vulnerable. Some issues, because of their importance and relationship to life and death, transcend others. In this election, even the most fundamental human right of life itself hangs in the balance. The election results could determine the direction of our country for generations to come.

For this reason, the Church has urged you, not only to vote your conscience, but also to form your conscience properly in a way that clearly acknowledges a difference in the importance of the various issues as they affect human dignity and, above all, life itself.

Now is the hour for us to earnestly invoke God's help. Here in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, I have called for this Sunday to be set aside as a day of prayer for our nation. Parishes have been asked to arrange for a period of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament following the Masses in order to allow a continuing opportunity to pray for God's grace and inspiration as we prepare to cast our vote.

Let us all then fulfill our responsibility and ask the Lord to bless the United States of America and keep us "one nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all."

Sincerely in Christ,

Cardinal Justin Rigali
Archbishop of Philadelphia