

Dear Friends,

In 2013, Pope Francis proclaimed: "[A good Catholic meddles in politics.](#)" Today, I am encouraging you to be a good Catholic and meddle away! Because on November 3rd, our country will go to the polls to determine who we want to lead us, but more than that, to determine who we want to be as a nation, what we value and seek for one another, especially the most vulnerable among us.

While Bellarmine remains a non-partisan parish community, we embrace our Catholic call to have an informed engagement in political life. As you've heard in the announcements at the Masses, we are hoping to have 100% of our eligible voters participating in this election. I know many of you have already voted since the polls opened last week, either absentee or early in-person at the Board of Elections, and I know many others are committed to voting in-person on Election Day. With the pandemic challenging us all, there is no wrong choice amongst these options, so long as you make a choice to vote. Now is the time to make sure you have a plan for how you will vote and to make sure your loved ones do too. You can find information on all three of these voting options for [Hamilton County here](#). This information varies by state and county, so please look up your local information if you live elsewhere.

Last month, the Jesuits released "[Contemplation and Political Action: An Ignatian Guide to Civic Engagement](#)," a new tool for helping us practice [active discipleship](#) by reflecting upon complex political realities in nuanced ways and so discerning the movement of the Spirit within us and our political institutions. We are challenged to become voting contemplatives in action. I hope you will spend some time praying with this document in the coming weeks. Using excerpts from Jim Martin, SJ and Pope Francis, parishioner Connie Widmer composed an [Examen Prayer for Our Elections](#). We offer this as another valuable prayer resource.

Also, Bellarmine will be co-sponsoring a livestream panel with the Institute for Spirituality and Social Justice here on campus entitled "[Catholicism, Social Justice, and the Elections](#)" on October 29, 7 PM. This event will feature Dr. John Sniegocki, a Christian ethicist; Sr. Tracey Horan, SP of Kino Border Initiative; and Rev. Deacon Royce Winters of the Archdiocese African American Ministries Office and Resurrection Parish. Together, they will help us dig deeper into some of the justice issues facing our world today, helping us to respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. We hope you will join us for this.

In his October encyclical, [Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship](#), Pope Francis describes how we, the Church, "cannot and must not remain on the sidelines' in the building of a better world... 'we want to be a Church that serves, that leaves home and goes forth from its places of worship, goes forth from its sacristies, in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation'"(para 276). I encourage you to take up this call today, to go forth from our parish home, to engage in reconciling dialogue around the important issues of our day, to prayerfully discern how you will vote, and to meddle as only a good Catholic can!

With great hope,  
Fr. Eric