

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John
Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ,
October 25, 2020**

FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP

As we prepare to vote this November, I'd like to share with you the directives from our bishops, once again. We are truly blessed to live in a country in which our government respects the voice of its citizens; a country that boasts of a *government of the people, by the people and for the people*. The ability to make one's voice heard is our right as American citizens and a freedom that has been handed down to us with great difficulty and struggle and sacrifice, including the loss of life – I am reminded of the State of Delaware's motto: "Live free or die!"

As Catholics and as Americans we are obligated to participate in this right to vote and the United States Bishops have re-emphasized the Catholic campaign for Faithful Citizenship: "Catholics Care. Catholics Vote." I invite you to visit the U.S. Bishop's Conference website: www.faithfulcitizenship.org, there you will find the Catholic teaching on Faithful Citizenship that has its base on a well formed conscience.

When we are faced with serious decisions, I'm sure we take our time to research everything that corresponds to our choices and consider all the ramifications. We may even put together a "Pros" and "Cons" list to assist in our deliberation.

I will like to leave you with three things that as Catholic citizens, we should always remember: **1 - Respect for the dignity of each person** is the core of Catholic social and moral teaching. This is our most basic principle. **2 - We focus on the common good**, not our own personal interests. We ask: "How can we make the world a better place? Not, how can I improve my own personal situation?" **3 - We have a responsibility** – a true obligation – to form our consciences and participate in the civic life of our nation.

As always I pledge my continued prayers for you and wish you a blessed and successful school year, fruitful in learning and moral growth.

Father John Carlos