***“You are not just voting for an individual,***

***you are voting for an agenda.***

***You are voting for a political philosophy.”***

***Colin Powell***

***Prayer for the Upcoming Elections***

Let us continue to pray during the next months for those running for legislative offices on the local, state and national level. May they emulate Gospel values and respect the dignity of all people regardless of race, creed or national origin.

**Reading 1**: In Isaiah 58: 6-7

Is this not rather the fast I choose?

* Releasing those bound unjustly
* Untying the thongs of the yoke
* Setting free the oppressed
* Sharing your bread with the hungry
* Bringing the afflicted and homeless into your home
* Clothing the naked

**Response:** In Mathew 25:34-40 Jesus says:

* For I was hungry and you gave me food

May these candidates support those who are in need of food assistance.

* I was thirsty and you gave me drink

May these candidates support safe drinking water and hold those businesses accountable for the contamination of water supplies.

* A stranger and you welcomed me

May these candidates support and stand on just and comprehensive Immigration Reform.

* Naked and you clothed me

May these candidates support welfare assistance for those who are truly in need and supports an increase in minimum wage.

* Ill and you cared for me

May these candidates support affordable health care.

* In prison and you visited me

May these candidates support prison reform and oppose the death penalty.

**Reading 2:** Social teachings of the Church –

May these candidates

* Address threats to the unborn, the life and dignity of those who are vulnerable, sick or unwanted
* Renew efforts to bring about decent health care, education and social services
* Address the economic crisis both national and global which has devastated lives and livelihoods, unemployment poverty and hunger
* Address the underlying cause of racism, addressing the inequalities in policing and the justice system
* Address the failure to pass a compressive Immigration bill and protect the rights and dignity of immigrants and refugees
* Address the causes of war and violence
* Care for the earth and all that God has created

**Reading 3:** The Bishops encourage us to:

* Focus more on moral principles than on the latest polls
* Focus more on the needs of the weak than on the benefits of the strong
* Focus on the pursuit of the common good than on the demands of narrow interests.

**Let us pray:** Gracious and loving God, let your Spirit guide all candidates on the November ballot. Drawing on the resources of faith we pray that each run their campaign with civility. Inspire each to use this opportunity to shape a society more respectful of the life, dignity, and rights of the human person, especially the poor and vulnerable. Amen.

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Prayer created by Sister Diane Smith, CSJ