



## October 24: Election time!

October 25, 2020 by The Revd Philip Cochrane

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made for everyone, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup> This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour*

1 Timothy 2

As I write we are on the eve of a Provincial election in BC and, of course, there will be elections across the United States of America in less than two weeks. Whatever your views, these elections are important – deciding who will control the levers of power and the policies that will be pursued. Speaking personally, I miss not being able to vote in the place where I live and look forward to the day when I too can vote in Canada.

Politics in Canada sometimes slips into being divisive, but nothing compares to the (dis)United States. What if you do not like the people in positions of authority? Does Paul's injunction to pray for those in authority still apply? Good question and the answer is yes, which may be a struggle, however, corrupt politics is not new, though we may feel these times are unprecedented. Go back to when Paul was writing this letter to Timothy – corruption was rife, there was violence, racism, prejudice and a narcissistic emperor in Nero. Indeed, it was ultimately Nero who had Paul martyred, the very "king" he urged Timothy to pray for!

So, I wanted to offer some prayers and resources, the first is from St Martin-in-the-Fields in London, UK:

*God of grace and truth,  
in Jesus you embody your choice of us.  
Bless all who make choices in this general election.  
Clothe your people with gratitude  
for the right to choose our government,  
and turn that gratitude into clear choices.*

*Give those who vote your spirit of wisdom and understanding.  
Uphold all who stand for election:  
preserve their dignity, and guide them in the path of integrity.  
Renew this nation in honour for the stranger,  
respect for the different, and cherishing of diversity.  
When all the votes are counted,  
show us ways to foster the flourishing of all  
and be a blessing to our neighbours.  
In the name of Christ and the power of your Spirit. Amen.*

With a US focus, the Episcopal Church and Forward Movement have created a Novena for the US Elections. A novena is an ancient tradition of nine days of devotional prayers, often with a specific intention. In this case, discernment in voting and for the well-being of the USA. Starting October 27 and continuing through the day after the election, they invite you to pray for the election of leaders in the United States.

The resources can be found here: <https://www.forwardmovement.org/Pages/Item/15381/Season-of-Prayer.aspx>

Finally, I wanted to offer a prayer which is not about elections but may be helpful as we learn to live well in this pandemic.

Prayer for the Journey

*Dear God, I do not know where you are leading me.  
I do not even know what my next day,  
my next week or my next year will look like.  
As I try to keep my hands open,  
I trust that you will put your hand in mine and bring me home.  
Thank you God for your love.  
Thank you. Amen.*

(Henri J.M. Nouwen, With Open Hands)

With love,

Philip