From the Pastor



November 15, 2026

Dearest Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

This election cycle was an interesting one. The polls turned out to have been correct, and we now have most of our representatives known for the coming new Congress. In Wisconsin we have Democratic control of the legislature for the first time in many years along with a new Democratic governor.

Happily, the election seems to have gone without any particular difficulties. Most people seem to have accepted the results whether their candidates won or lost. Even our president managed to go almost a week before he questioned the fairness of the election. Sadly, there are still a few who find it inconceivable that their candidate could have lost in a fair election. Also, sadly, there are those who are declaring the end of the republic because Congress is in the control of the Democrats. Will we never learn?

If there were any surprises, it was the margin of victory. Most of the races showed a rather solid margin of victory. What was even more surprising to me was seeing my home county turn blue. In Vernon County, Wisconsin, the real election tends to be the Republican primary. So, seeing the county colored blue says something loud and clear about their attitude towards the Republican Party and our 3rd district congressman.

Of course, the republic is not going to fall, and we will continue doing the best we can living lives pleasing to God. The task before us has not changed and will not change. It is not dependent on what party is in power. It depends only on our faithfulness in living our baptismal promise to love God and our neighbor as Jesus has taught us; and our neighbor.

It appears that the current federal administration is intent on doubling down on some of the policies which brought about the ire of the electorate – immigration, foreign adventures, and trade policy. Our task remains: love our neighbor, including the 'alien among us'; seek peace; and deal fairly with one another.

Will there be policy proposals and legislation coming from our new legislative bodies with which we will not agree? Indeed, undoubtedly there will. And just as with the previous majority party, it will be our duty to hold them to account.

May God guide and inspire us in holding our government leaders to account. And may they be supported by our prayers.

Pray Well!

Fr. Michael

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On Living the Vocation to the Holiness

I have given two columns to the subject of music and the liturgy. This is my third and last column, for the time being. I'd like to encourage your greater participation in the liturgy through music and singing.

The first thing that I tend to hear from people is, "I'm not a good singer", or something along those lines. My first thought is usually, "God gave you that voice, He deserves it back!" (That's supposed to be funny!) But I know that what's really at play is a discomfort with singing that is at times familial, at times cultural, and at other times personal. I get it. What I'd like to suggest to you is, first, the music chosen is chosen with an eye towards what the Church has given us as a lens which focuses us on the Church's message for that particular liturgy. We choose the music used with a particular eye towards great (or as good as is available) text – the words, which carry the message of God's love, instruction, and encouragement. So, I at least ask and encourage your participation by opening to the hymn and following along with the text. Even if you are simply following along or, better, mumbling along under your breath, you are receiving that message which is good and important and also a deeper participation with your brothers & sisters in the assembly.

Sometimes, I also hear people who will say, "that song doesn't speak to me". Indeed, my mother said it to me once when I came home totally pumped about the music that was chosen (not by me) for a particular Mass. I get it. I'm not always open and ready to receive what the Church has offered in the lections (readings) for the day either; but I receive them, nevertheless, because they are offered by my holy Mother, the Church. Maybe I don't appreciate it in the moment. Maybe I'm not ready to receive it at this juncture in my life. Maybe I'm just being stubborn (and sometimes **I am!**). What's important is that I file it away in the back of my mind, trusting that at some point I will be ready to receive it and profit from the message contained therein.

I know that *style* can be an issue. Some people love one style or another and that's understandable. That is why we try to provide music in a number of styles. The decision regarding style, when there is a choice between styles of music with a similar text, is often a matter of the mood we want to set for that particular day, season, or even part of the Mass. We are well aware that we won't please everyone ALL of the time, but we do try to be aware so we can please all of the people SOME of the time.

Finally, please give Emmett, Fr. Kyle, and me your feedback. Also, don't be afraid to ask about a particular music choice.In this manner, we all learn and grow together.

