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Exhortation to the Catholic People of Brazil

The Catholic faithful are reminded of their moral obligation to promote Catholic principles in society. One of the important ways to do this is to participate in the election of good leaders for their country. Pope Pius XII reiterated this moral obligation in two separate addresses. Please read the words of the Vicar of Christ on this matter.

Address to the Delegates of the International Conference of Emigration (October 17, 1951):

It is a right and a duty to draw the attention of the faithful to the extraordinary importance of elections and the moral responsibility which rests on everyone who has the right to vote. Without any doubt, the Church intends to remain outside and above political parties, but how can she remain indifferent to the composition of a Parliament, when the Constitution gives it power to pass laws which so directly affect the highest religious interests and even the condition of life of the Church herself? Then there are also other arduous questions, above all the problems and economic struggles which closely touch the well-being of the people. In so far as they are of a temporal order (though in reality they also affect the moral order), Churchmen leave to others the care of pondering and treating technically with them for the common welfare of the nation. From all this it follows that:

It is a strict duty for all who have the right, men or women, to take part in the elections. Whoever abstains, especially out of cowardice, commits a grave sin, a mortal fault.

Allocution to the Sacred College (March 16, 1946):

It is the right and at the same time the essential duty of the Church to instruct the faithful in word and writing from the pulpit or in the other customary forms, in regard to everything that concerns faith and morals or is irreconcilable with her own doctrine and therefore inadmissible for Catholics, be it a question of philosophical or

religious systems, or of the ends intended by their fosterers, or of their moral conceptions concerning the life of either individuals or community.

The exercise of the right to vote is an act of serious moral responsibility, at least when it is a question of electing those who are called to give the country its constitution and laws.

Let us pray that God will protect the Brazilian people from the scourge of socialism and communism. Let us never forget the powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, especially when we consider the great victory for the Christian fleet in the Battle of Lepanto through the recitation of the Holy Rosary.

With my prayers and blessing,

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