

As we enter the Election Cycle.

We Americans have a genius for amnesia. It's in our DNA. Henry Ford captured this best more than a century ago when he said "History is more or less bunk. It's tradition. We don't want tradition. We want to live in the present, and the only history that is worth a tinker's xxx is the history we make today."

I say: NO! Our past comes with lessons to be learned. To help us form a better future from our past mistakes. The past shapes who we are and explains where we came from – details that are informative when trying to understand a crisis like the political car wreck we face this fall election.

The United States began as a marriage of Biblical faith and Enlightenment thought. And I will add a Healthy Republic needed the Catholic understanding of the Natural Law where citizens were expected to live the virtues and participate in the Common Good for all. The tension between these elements in the American character fed the nation's dynamism from the start.

Pierre Manent (French Catholic Political Philosopher) gives us a key to understanding the American psyche and its political implications. Pierre Manent gives credit to "the magnificent contribution that Christianity brought to modern political freedom." It rest in Christianity's deep respect for the law. And while "human power is liberated or encouraged; NO human being (Religious or Secular) is above the law."

So what's the point in all of this? Again, the past shapes us. And history should offer lessons for our actions going forward. Before we descend into the final weeks before this year's Election Day, we may want to refresh our memories about (The Roots of a Humane Political and Legal Order with a Christian Lens).

The words in "quotation marks" below were delivered last month at the "Annual Red Mass" in Edinburgh, Scotland, by the Catholic Archbishop Leo Cushley. The audience was Scottish judges and lawmakers in a nation of dwindling religious observance and increasingly toxic "woke" spirit.

He said:

"It is not much of an exaggeration to say that, until Christian times, the law was often made by the ruler himself, and the law changed according to the whim of that leader. The word of the leader was law. The morality of the law, the rightness of the law, was neither here nor there. The ruler had the power to make the law, and the freedom to apply it as he or she saw fit. There was no appeal to a higher ideal.

With Christianity however, the ruler . . . has not only the right to make laws and apply them, he or she has the duty to make laws that are right, laws that are just, and to apply them without fear or favor.

We have heard of the post-Reformation idea of the "divine right of kings" . . . But before there was the divine right of kings, there was the divine duty of kings: Kings were accountable to God and to a higher moral law, above any human justice.

By embracing this ideal, Christian kings and their Christian laws were to seek and to treasure a humility and objectivity that were unknown among rulers prior to the Christian

era. They didn't value or apply the criteria of political correctness or expedience or fashionable social theories. They valued and applied facts in an endeavor to get at the truth of things as they truly are, and make their judgments accordingly.

That humility, that recognition that our law-making is imperfect, gave Christian legislation strength and durability in Europe. It pointed legislators towards an application that didn't favor the wealthy and the powerful or the people with the biggest sticks. Instead, Christian-inspired legislation favored reality, truth, honesty, and integrity."

I believe the archbishop's comments are useful to us in America this election. When you vote this fall, ask yourself: Will this candidate rule and make laws through a lens that a "civil law" alone is just and ordered because: I OR WE SAY IT IS SO. Or, is there a chance the candidate might understand that a law should be in conformity to a higher law and principle. In other words vote for a candidate you think may actually make laws that are in conformity with "GOD'S ETERNAL AND NATURAL LAW" implanted in creation and nature. When a candidate seeks to make civil laws based on God's reality and truth; we will experience what is truly just for the various groups involved leading to incredible human flourishing and freedom.

When we see life, people, babies, the elderly, marriage, family, our sexuality and bodies, immigration, religious freedom and expression through the lens of a Higher Authority (God's Eternal and Natural Law) only then will we become what made us one of the Greatest Nations to have lived and given life to all because of God's Blessings.

Notes:

-With the immigration debate: the rule of law can never be ignored in order to protect people from being exploited. An open boarder allows for the exploitation of people, while "the rule of law" used in the past protected the traveler seeking lawful entry. In the end the Common Good of the citizen, and for all involved was at the root of immigration enforcement. The Catholic Catechism always includes rule of law with this issue.

-The Election: The way to understand limited government is through recognition of a definite higher authority.

Vivat Jesus,
Father Vic Gournas

Prayer for "Consecrating the Election to the Virgin Mary"

Please remember to really ask yourself: are any candidates, by their actions or words, not friendly towards our Catholic Faith.

Let us pray

"Mary Immaculate, living tabernacle of the Divinity, where the eternal Wisdom lies hidden to be adored and served by angels and men, Queen of heaven and of earth, beneath whose sway are subject all things that are lower than God, Patroness of the United States of America, sorrowful and mindful of our own sinfulness and the sins of our nation, we come to Thee, our refuge and hope. Knowing that our country cannot be saved by our own works and mindful of how much our nation has departed from the ways of Thy Son, we humbly ask that Thou wouldst turn Thine eyes upon our country to

bring about its conversion. We consecrate to Thee the integrity of the upcoming election and its outcome, so that what is spiritually and morally best for the citizens of our country may be accomplished, and that all of those who are elected would govern according to the spiritual and moral principles which will bring our nation into conformity with the teachings of Thy Son. Give grace to the citizens of this land so that they will choose leaders according to the Sacred Heart of Thy Son, that His glory may be made manifest, lest we be given the leaders we deserve. Trusting in the providential care of God the Father and Thy maternal care, we have perfect confidence that Thou will take care of us and will not leave us forsaken. O Mary Immaculate, pray for us.” Amen

**Vivat Jesus,
Father Vic Gournas**