

**HOMILY OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE**  
**APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
**NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONVENING**  
**GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY – WASHINGTON, D.C.**  
**DECEMBER 11, 2024**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is good to be with you to address this question which is so central to our Catholic mission: *How can we strengthen the contribution of Catholic social thought to public life in the U.S.?* Please know of the Holy Father’s spiritual closeness to you, and of his appreciation for your efforts in this arena.

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In the readings for today’s Mass, we are offered two graces to support us in our work of evangelization in the public square. The first grace is the Holy Spirit’s gift of good counsel, and the second grace is Christ’s promise of rest.

Good counsel comes to us through the prophet Isaiah, where God says: “Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these things.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the best of counsel, because by these words, God is reminding us that he, the Creator of all things, is the one who gives us strength and knowledge to carry out our mission in the world. This is always the proper orientation for our work. We come together with our expertise, our experience, and our wisdom, asking each other: *How can we do a better job of infusing Catholic principles into public life?* And God says to us: *First of all, look to me. Remember that I have created all these things.* And so, we remember that we are not the creators. Nor are we the saviors. If our work to make the world a better place is to be fruitful, then it must simply be a *response* to what we have seen and heard in our encounter with God. He is in charge. And we are his ambassadors.

For that reason, our celebration of this Eucharist is not tangential to the rest of our work these days. It is central to that work, because it is in the Eucharist, above

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<sup>1</sup> *Isaiah* 40:26.

all, that we open our hearts together to the heart of God. We listen to his Word, we eat the sacred Bread which is his Body. And by doing so in communion with each other, we are drawing from the very Source of wisdom, who will guide our work.

So, let us receive this gift of good counsel: Lift up your eyes to God.

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Secondly, Christ promises rest to those who labor with him.

It is a taxing labor that we are about. We are trying to practice politics—in the truest sense of that word—as an expression of charity. This is what Pope Francis reminds us—what previous Popes have also said: that politics is one of the highest forms of charity.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the way many people practice politics, it can be hard to see that! But that is why we must practice “a better kind of politics”.<sup>3</sup> This means laboring patiently to remind our fellow men and women of those principles of Catholic thought that are being minimized or excluded from our discourse. Political charity entails sharing the yoke with Christ—to use his image—so that our pursuit of the common good doesn’t get swallowed up by a partisan “winner-take-all” mentality. Political charity involves advocating for policies that bring the marginalized poor to the center of our society’s concern, even when that requires austerity on the part of those who are privileged. This is not easy work.

But Jesus says to those “who labor and are burdened”: “Come to me...and I will give you rest.”<sup>4</sup> Jesus is Lord; and, as Creator of all things, he holds the world in his hands. Because of this, we can rest from worry, knowing that our only task is to be the ambassadors of his love to this troubled world.

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Let us allow this celebration of the Eucharist to be an encounter with Christ, and with these two gifts he provides for us: his good counsel, and a share in his rest.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 180.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>4</sup> *Matthew* 11:28.