



ASIA/PHILIPPINES - General Elections: the Church traces the identikit of the "good candidate"

Lingayen (Agenzia Fides) – To face the next general elections, scheduled for next May 13, "with the eyes of faith" and "the mind enlightened by the values of the Gospel." This is what a Pastoral Letter by His Exc. Mgr. Socrates Villegas, Archbishop of Lingayen Dagupan asks, which aims to understand "what can the Church do to contribute in the next elections." This is why the text of the Letter, sent to Fides Agency, traces a sort of identikit of the good candidate.

The Letter starts with the certainty that "our best contribution is to pray so that the Lord may guide every voter and each candidate in the next civil liability", insisting that "only God can enlighten us in our decision-making process so that the voice of the people can truly reflect the voice of God." You can contribute "even with a respectful silence in the forum of public discussion: silence is the language of God" and is "the only antidote to the strategies of the insane and ridiculous campaign that we are witnessing" The Archbishop recalls that "the Church is the conscience of society and must remain such," and that looks at challenges such as the promotion of the common good, solidarity, spirituality, education. At the same time the Church "is the mother and teacher of voters and candidates together": a loving mother, a teacher who corrects with mercy. The Church, exhorts the Archbishop should not "support any candidate,": it should, in fact, "refuse to play with the fire of political power or is likely to burn itself."

To help voters in the choice, the text suggests: not to take into consideration candidates who do not declare a clear and categorical NO to divorce, abortion, euthanasia, birth control and same-sex marriages, that is, if it promotes "anti-life choices"; to refuse Candidates associated with drug trafficking, illegal gambling, or if they are involved in terrorism and corruption; not to vote for candidates who were convicted in court or promote vote buying; to take notice of hypocrisy, if the candidate "shows religiosity only during the election campaign." The fundamental question, the text concludes is this: Who would have voted for Jesus? (PA) (Agenzia Fides 16/04/2013)