

Dear Friends,

I am back from my trip and it was very nice. I wish I could write about it this week, but there are far more important things to write about, like our national elections coming up on Tuesday. Three quick comments about the upcoming election:

First, please make sure to vote. I do not need to tell you how amazing and unique our right to vote is around the world. I also do not need to remind you what hardships throughout the years of our country's history many people endured to give us all that right. I'd like to focus on the positive. I find it so exciting that the greatest and most powerful nation on earth humbly bows to its people every year and asks for their blessing. This is our chance to have a say in the political life of America, Wow!

Secondly, please don't forget about the local elections. These elections are won and lost with tens of votes rather than 10 millions of votes. Do you know the judges who ask to continue in office or be elected? How about the Board of Education, do you know who you will vote for? Think about it, research it, and pray over it because these important decisions are often overshadowed by our presidential race.

Finally, I would like to say a word about the slots referendum. Morally the concern is that slots provide a "no limits" atmosphere where those truly addicted to gambling have nothing to stop them. It also has been seen over and over again as a slippery slope leading to full blown casinos and all that comes with them. Practically the question becomes is this really of great benefit to the State? 33% of the proceeds goes directly to the slot machine operators. The rest gets divided up in numerous ways including some to help with the rise in crime and gambling addictions this will cause. The first time significant revenue will come to the state is predicted to be 2012 and nobody knows if it will be enough. Funding for the education of our children should be a priority that we don't have to make up dangerous and destructive new revenue streams for. The Catholic Conference says it well, "the common good is not served and human dignity is not promoted when budget needs are addressed through revenue streams likely to increase burdens on low income families and expand social ills."

Grace and Peace,
Fr. Matt