

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2020
MORE REFLECTIONS**

**THE CATHOLIC FAITH AND TRUMP'S
FRAUDULENT ELECTION CLAIMS**
by John R. Connolly

These reflections are not based solely on the election laws, rules, procedures, and traditions of our constitutional democracy; they are rooted in my Catholic faith. The Catholic faith is grounded in the paschal event of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the two fundamental commandments that he proclaimed as the greatest commandments, to love God and your neighbor as yourself. It embraces the fundamental doctrinal, moral, and social teachings of the Catholic Church, as well as the ten commandments, the theological virtues, and the beatitudes. Lying, cheating, bearing false witness, and spreading fraudulent claims are certainly incompatible with the teachings of the Catholic church. The filing of fabricated and unfounded lawsuits, coercing others to perform illegal acts to further one's own gain, and misleading one's supporters through lies and unsubstantiated claims are all actions that are not supported by the fundamental beliefs of the Catholic faith. Neither are actions like bullying others into supporting

one's fraudulent claims, questioning the loyalty and patriotism of those who disagree with you, or encouraging and condoning threats against those who question one's fraudulent claims. Catholic Social teaching does not support placing one's own egotistical self-interest before the common good. Fraudulently questioning the legitimacy of the votes of minorities and poor people is fundamentally racist.

One could go on and on with the moral decadency of Trump's attempt to overthrow the legitimate results of the 2020 election, but the main point that I wish to make is why you are only hearing this from me. Where are the U.S. bishops? Why are they not speaking out against these violations of the beliefs and moral teaching of the Catholic faith? Of more concern, why are some of the U.S. bishops actually supporting Trump's false claims and his attempt to overturn a legitimate election? To be even-handed and nonpartisan the U.S. bishops need to condemn threats to the fundamental beliefs of the Catholic faith from all sides.

Every bone in my Catholic faith supports the condemnation of these immoral efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election. It is a faith that is rooted in eight years of

Catholic elementary school, four years in a Catholic high school, eight years studying to be a Catholic priest, six years of studying theology in a Catholic graduate school. I have not created the beliefs of the Catholic faith that inspire me; they have come from my parents, my teachers at all levels, Catholic priests and Catholic nuns, as well as from the bishops themselves. Why can the U.S. bishops not speak out at this time and provide a more solid moral foundation for Catholics living in the United States? In a recent article in *Commonweal* magazine Massimo Faggioli wrote, “we should be concerned with the lasting damage the outgoing one [president Trump] has done. Trumpism still threatens the Catholic contribution to the moral-religious consensus at the basis of democracy in America, along with the viability of the American Catholic project itself.” (“A Reset with Rome, But Not at Home,” *Commonweal*, November 23, 2020).