From the President: Civic Responsibility

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Recommended Citation
(2020) "From the President: Civic Responsibility," DePaul Magazine: Vol. 1 : Iss. 412027 , Article 2. Available at: https://via.library.depaul.edu/depaul-magazine/vol1/iss412027/2

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Voting rights activist Susan B. Anthony famously said, “Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it.”

This issue of DePaul Magazine focuses on democracy. For me, the right to vote is the epitome of democracy, and I strongly believe it’s my civic responsibility to use it.

When my wife, Jo, and I were undergraduates at the University of the Philippines, we lived under martial law. During the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos, there were no presidential elections for 12 years. That’s why I will never take my right to vote for granted.

In time, Jo and I graduated, got jobs and went on to earn graduate degrees. But the political circumstances in the Philippines at the time made life challenging. We had our dreams, but living under a dictatorship had its limitations. For us, more education was the answer. Higher education brought us to the United States and afforded us freedom and rights. But with freedom and rights come a responsibility and a duty.

As citizens of this country and with this history in mind, I am asking our faculty, staff, students and alumni to exercise your right to vote in the upcoming elections taking place this year.

I encourage you to educate yourself on issues that matter to you and your future on all sides of the political landscape. Make sure you’re registered to vote and encourage your family and friends to do the same. Most importantly, vote for candidates and issues you believe in.

The right to vote is a great responsibility. We owe it to ourselves and to each other to take this right seriously and solemnly. I speak from experience when I say there are millions of people across the world who do not have this right, but desperately want and need it. I urge you not to take your right for granted.

A. Gabriel Esteban, PhD  
President