

## MESSAGE FOR THE ELECTION 2024

My dear people, this is a very important moment for our country, it's Election time. Our beloved motherland is in the midst of an election. Our diocese of Simla -Chandigarh will vote on different days depending on which specific date your state will vote. The Union Territory of Chandigarh will vote on 1st June 2024.

Please do not forget this important date and your appointment on that day at the voters booth.

As Christians, we are called to be good citizens, and as citizens we participate in the government by voting. This is a fundamental right. But I remind you this is not just a right, but also a sacred duty.

Hence my first message to you is to vote. I recommend that you go early to vote keeping in mind the unusually warm conditions in North India, at this time of the year.

Secondly, vote wisely. Do say a prayer to God before you go to vote, to help you discern who you are to vote for. One who will help the country become one big family, all children of God, all working together for peace, progress and harmony in our country.

Thirdly, vote according to your conscience, for the one who is clean, selfless, and who will help build a healthy and happy society with special concern for the poor, the marginalized, the disadvantaged, the opportunity of growth for all.

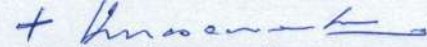
My dear people we are in the month of May 2024, and the month of May is Mary's month and the month of the Rosary, do pray the family rosary for the country and for good leaders every day.

I encourage every parish to make a special Novena to Mary till election day. I'm sending a prayer to every parish church, institution that you can use.

Haryana votes on May 25 and Punjab, Himachal Pradesh & Chandigarh vote on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024.

Kindly exercise your voting power.

God bless you and thank you.



+ Ignatius Mascarenhas

Bishop of Simla Chandigarh

## PRAYER FOR OUR NATION

Oh God of Freedom and Love, let your light of truth shine on our Nation, Dispelling all darkness and untruth.

Let the dreams of our founding fathers and the values of our Constitution Equality, Liberty and Fraternity – be always held in highest esteem.

Let the people of all castes and creeds, all denominations and persuasions live in harmony and peace steering far away from hatred and violence.

Protect our legislature as a place of discerning minds. Raise our judiciary as the hallmark of integrity, prudence and justice. Keep our print, visual and social media as the channels of truth for edifying discourses. Protect our institutions from the infiltration of the evil forces.

Let the poor of our country be provided with the means of livelihood. Let the dalits, tribals and the marginalized be brought into the mainstream of nation building. Let justice and integrity prevail in every sphere of our life.

May the ethos of true democracy envelop our elections with dignity and the flames of honest patriotism enkindle our political leaders.

Almighty Father, bless our nation with the revival of the gospel values in the name of your Beloved Son Jesus Christ by sending forth your Holy Spirit.

Oh Mary our Blessed Mother, who appeared at Fatima, give hope to the struggling nations and intercede for our beloved country. Amen.