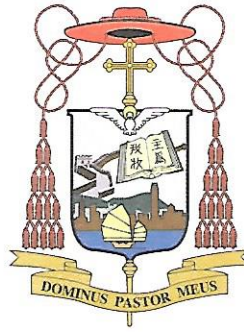


湯漢樞機  
天主教香港教區主教



Cardinal John Tong  
Bishop of Hong Kong

## PASTORAL LETTER OF CARDINAL JOHN TONG

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

### ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE COMING ELECTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The social teaching of the Church in recent years has given much importance to the active participation of the faithful in public life. Thus Vatican II, in its *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, no. 75, says: "It is fully consonant with human nature that there should be politico-juridical structures providing all citizens without any distinction with ever improving and effective opportunities to play an active part in the establishment of the juridical foundations of the political community, in the administration of public affairs, in determining the aims and the terms of reference of public bodies, and in the election of political leaders. Every citizen ought to be mindful of his right and his duty to promote the common good by using his vote." (Cf St. John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World*, no.42; *Encyclical Letter on the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum*, nos.46-47). From this perspective, I wish to call your attention to the upcoming election of the Legislative Council to be held on 4 September.

As we are all aware, over the past two decades, the Hong Kong SAR has gone through a long process in her political reform: there have been strong aspirations for more democracy; consultations and dialogues have taken place and various proposals have been brought forward; some deep-rooted problems have remained unresolved or unaddressed; finally, the political reform has reached a stalemate, leaving many people in utter frustration and disappointment. What is before us now is an unfinished task and an ultimate goal not yet attained. As Christians we must not, however, give up hope. We must place our trust in God, Who is all the time guiding the course of human history and temporal affairs by his Providence. For this reason, I urge you to see the upcoming Legco election as an opportunity for contributing to the well-being of Hong Kong society. You should take an active part in voting and in standing for election.

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Before voting, you should consider carefully the key issues facing our local society and the various needs posed by livelihood and the common good. Assess the personal qualities and platform of each candidate. On the other hand, you should scrutinize the personal integrity, scale of values, philosophy, strengths and weaknesses of the candidates, the way they deal with people and daily affairs, their sense of responsibility, their past contribution to the local community and to Hong Kong society at large, as well as their political stance. As for parishes and Church organizations, they should exhort the faithful to pray for just and fair elections and encourage them to take an active part in voting and in standing for election. They can also organize related talks and seminars.

Let us respond to our Christian vocation. Whatever might be our human limitations, let us rest assured that “in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8, 28).

May God bless all of you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+John Card Tong". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

+John Card TONG  
Feast of St. Mary Magdelene  
22 July 2016