



From the Office of the President

John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.

REGIS UNIVERSITY | DENVER, COLORADO

**After the Election: A Message from the President
November 11th, 2016**

Dear Regis Community,

The results of the presidential election have elicited a range of emotions and responses at Regis University that include elation, grief and indifference. I have been talking with people in our community, as well as monitoring my own heart and mind. The concerns about the impact of the bitter campaign and the tense election touch me, and have strong ripple effects in different corners of Regis University.

For those for whom the president elect represented a necessary change in America's way of being and doing, there is contentment, joy and the satisfaction that may come with a fiery competition. For those whose political leanings, social hopes, religious beliefs and morals were connected to his opponents, there is deep concern, sadness, fear, and even grief for the death of a dream. That this year's race is over is a welcome reality to almost everyone, but it leaves this University and our nation in a place of paradox. We know the process of healing and restoration is necessary and is going to take time. To help us with this process, I am asking my Cabinet to construct and encourage forums and gatherings to help us move beyond this present moment into a healthy, functioning and loving future.

I am especially concerned for our students, staff and faculty who have felt targeted in the Trump campaign: students of color, Muslims, women, the LGBTQ community, individuals with disabilities and undocumented persons. I recognize there may be a very personal and present sense of fear for their safety, welfares and futures. These concerns are not to be discounted or trivialized.

I am also concerned about how people may express their own responses to the outcome. We are already mindful of the price of emotions turned inward, isolating people and leading to rage or even despair. Grief can lead us there. Victory can make us appear arrogant and uncaring. Loss can make us bitter and resentful. Either position can lead us to blame that helps no one, especially in the face of the need to heal our country.

I am eager to remind this community that we are a place of learning, founded on Jesuit principles. Our Ignatian heritage urges us to care for the totality of ourselves and others and to contemplate before we talk or act. The virtue of our Ignatian tradition encourages us to aim for the greatest good, listen to divergent views, assume good in others and trust there is some element of truth to which they strive. All of these things will help us build an environment of love that is the reflection of the Creator of All. This is no simple, mushy love. This is the harder love that refrains from a word or label because it harms, a love that moves us as individuals to the care of a whole community. We must strive for this kind of love at this University.



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We must also engage in civil discourse and civil behavior as an institution of higher education. We must be mindful and careful of our speech and its impact on others, yet we must be allowed to engage in respectful speech.

We have the tools we need at this University and in this nation to become something far better than what we have been. Within our community there are strengths and skills: a capacity for hard work and hope, intelligence, breadth of heart and great ideas that can build rather than tear down. I urge us to look to these things in the months ahead.

To begin our healing, please join University Ministry for an interfaith gathering to pray for peace and reconciliation for our country, our community and ourselves. We will gather in the St. John Francis Regis Chapel at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, November 11, 2016. All are welcome.

Gratefully,

John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.
President