Opinion
Editorial



Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump waves as he walks with former first lady Melania Trump at an election night watch party at the Palm Beach Convention Center Nov. 6, 2024, in West Palm Beach, Fla. (AP/Evan Vucci)

by NCR Editorial Staff

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We now must live with our worst fears.

The incompetent, dishonest, divisive and authoritarian-prone Donald J. Trump again has been elected president of the United States. In time, volumes of books will attempt to explain this colossal lapse of judgment. Sooner explored are the dire consequences of this election for our nation, wider human family and the planet.

For now, as we embark on an uncharted journey, allow no time for debilitating self-pity or anger. Shed these temptations for the sake of individual and collective health. We need balance and wholeness to move forward while protecting the most vulnerable. We need mental acuity to decide how to support each other and our nation's democratic institutions.

We are not the first to face such darkness; we now join countless others living uncertain lives amidst political turmoil. We can learn from them, first by taking less for granted and then by reaching out to them and the rest of the human family to know better how to keep the faith, build courage and sustain resilience and resistance. We need each other more than ever to avoid doubt and to hold fast to principles of fairness, decency and truth. So, how large is this community from whom we need this encouragement? It is global, crosses cultures, races and religions and reaches back generations.

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We need hope. Hope begets hope. Remember, we are people of hope. We grow in hope by embracing interdependency and connectedness, leaning on each other when we falter, and offering a hand when we see the need. Our hope is not rooted in some fleeting optimism, but in the enduring truths of our faith grounded in the Gospels, which teach boundless love and the core belief that darkness does not have the last word.

Consider this Tibetan saying: "Tragedy should be utilized as a source of strength." Pain invites purpose. Left unattended, despair paralyzes. With purpose, it can become a powerful force for change. We need to channel our inner struggles into outward action. Yes, we have additional burdens, but yes, we have new callings.

Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel demonstrated remarkable resilience as he confronted evil and injustice. He wrote, "Never shall I forget those moments that butchered my

God and my soul." Despite unimaginable grief, Wiesel became a tireless advocate for justice, peace and human dignity. He taught us that during the darkest moments, we always have a choice: to let our pain consume us or to drive us forward. Going forward, we give voice to those who cannot speak for themselves.

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We must recognize that our wounds can become sources of healing for others. Henri Nouwen beautifully illustrated this in The Wounded Healer. Our physical, emotional or spiritual wounds are part of what makes us human. Rather than hiding these wounds, we can embrace them, allowing our vulnerabilities to connect us more deeply with those around us. Jesus himself is the ultimate example of a wounded healer. His suffering and sacrifice brought love, hope and healing to a broken world. In following his example, we are invited to transform our uncertainty, anger, pain and disappointment into greater solidarity, compassion and action for others.

Our mission, though not new, has become increasingly urgent. We must speak the truth, live with integrity, reach out to those in need, build and preserve just structures, and stand up to our oppressors.

So, we begin to write the next chapter of our nation's and church's history. May they reflect the most sacred of our values and an unwavering commitment to truth.



Republican President-elect Donald Trump addresses supporters during his rally at the Palm Beach County Convention Center in West Palm Beach, Fla., Nov. 6, 2024, after being elected the 47th president of the United States. (OSV News/Reuters/Brendan Mcdermid)

Three points:

- Defeating despair requires inward resilience, which involves cultivating a sense of gratitude. Even in darkness. Especially in darkness. Each recognition of thanksgiving reminds us of the basic goodness that persists and permeates life, even amid struggles.
- Our connections to others strengthen us. We are not alone. Our relationships with friends, family, and community create a critical support network. By reaching out, sharing burdens and offering mutual support, we bolster our abilities for collective resilience.
- Mindfulness, meditation and prayer ground us, bring us back to the present moment and help us manage fears of the unknown. They foster calm, steady

resolve and empower us to face the future with clarity and peace.

We will endure Donald Trump and his sycophants. His time will pass. Sadly, he will cause significant damage. However, we can, indeed we must, limit this damage through our unceasing resolve. As active witnesses of justice and mercy, we will transform darkness into light and weakness into strength for ourselves and others. Every act of love, every gesture of kindness and healing builds the nation that, for now, seems to elude us.

Hope is not a mere feeling. Hope is a choice we make every day. When we choose hope, we embody the essence of our Christian calling — a calling to be agents of change and witnesses of the love our nation so desperately needs, now more than ever.

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