

## DOCTOR IN UTROQUE JURE

### **Joseph Robinette Biden Jr.**

In administranda re publica hoc propositum esse debet, ut fideliter consulatur felicitati salutique communi. Sententiam iam agnoscitis illius Thomae, hominis liberalissimi, qui vero exempla antiquae virtutis frequenter respiciebat. Ciceroni enim hoc videbatur de officiis disserenti: "Vehementer autem amor multitudinis commovetur ipsa fama et opinione liberalitatis, beneficentiae, iustitiae, fidei omniumque earum virtutum, quae pertinent ad mansuetudinem morum ac facilitatem"; et illud: "nam et iis fidem habemus, quos plus intellegere quam nos arbitramur quosque et futura prospicere credimus et cum res agatur in discrimenque ventum sit, expedire rem et consilium ex tempore capere posse." Hi sunt boni viri quibus salutem nostram et civium et liberorum rectissime committi arbitramur. Qua par est observantia talem virum ad vos duco JOSEPHUM ROBINETTE BIDEN Jr., septimum quadragesimum Vice Praesidem Reipublicae Americanae. Natus stirpe Hibernica, educatus fide catholica, δημοκρατικὴν partem amplexus adulescens leges et magistratus adivit eo consilio, ut fortiter defenderet iustitiam et aequitatem. Ab eo tempore belli Asiatici, quo iuvenis vix albo senatorio adscriptus voce vehementi paci patrocinatus est, adhuc pertinaciter exhortatur ut arma tantum, non animae adimantur in Mesopotamia Libya Parthia ubicumque Mars saeva excitaverit bella. Iure vero ei creditum est, qui senator triginta sex annos indefatigatus consuluerat rebus externis ac patriae incolumitati; qui valenter praesederat decemviris iudicibus creandis et legibus de rebus externis faciendis; qui denique haec mire coniunxit iustitiam et humanitatem, ut in legibus illis (si licet unum laudare ex exemplis innumeris) quas strenue promovit ad incolumitatem mulierum defendendam. Vice Praesidis deinde officio functus est pari fide constantia iustitia, opera strenuissime data ut aequa stipendia mereantur vectigalia imponantur, negotiis nulla iniuria procuratis, exercitu modica impensa comparato; ne umquam deficiant victus ac valetudo, tecta negotia vehicula vel cetera strumenta commoditatis, ne ullo discrimine homo separetur ab homine. De officio dixit olim Johannes ille, qui primus Vice Praeses meruit de re publica Americana, nihil inanius umquam paratum esse; festiviter: hic Vice Praeses plurimum pollet inter omnes. Si causam quaesiveris, in huius virtute praecipua invenias: fidem dico, quam piissime exhibuit erga rem publicam, erga Praesidem optimum, erga civitatem omniumque hominum societatem. Nec illa fidelem in discrimine destituit. 'Fidem serva, fili mi' quasi pater sibi solitus est dicere. Heu miserandus, cui honorem ipsum ineunti atra dies abstulerat uxorem priorem atque filiolum dilectam! Cuius summo in fastigio filium aetate florentem nuper dirus morbus funere mersit acerbo! Sed dum fert pugnos acerrimos, optima ecce Fides susurrat in aures: 'surge, agedum, surge.' Felix proelior aptissime dicitur a Praeside, cum fortunae iniquissimae ictus invictus exceperit. Quod est, ut puto, consentaneum stirpi Hibernicae, una cum pietate fide facundia. Quis vero virum tam eloquentem crederet puerum quadam linguae haesitatione trepidavisse? Quod impedimentum pugnaciter vicit, ut olim Demosthenes ille defensor impavidus libertatis Atheniensium. Oratores autem dicunt composite et ornate; hic tanta sermonis libertate loquitur et familiaritate, ut eum te adloqui credas: crede, nam cor ipsum vir adloquitur. Tanta magnitudine et animi et honoris amor multitudinis commovetur, ut simul dux fortissimus et amicus gratissimus esse videatur. 'Unus e nobis': sic laudatur ab omnibus civibus suis. Nostrum in coetum nunc maximo gaudio accipiamus libentem et dignum maximo honore.

## DOCTOR IN LAWS

### **Joseph Robinette Biden Jr.**

The science of just government is inextricably linked with the pursuit of people's happiness. We have it from Thomas Jefferson; he had it from Cicero (*On Moral Duties* 2.32-33): "People's love is powerfully attracted by a man's reputation for generosity, kindness, justice, honour; we have confidence in men who are just and true — in those who, we believe, have better insight into the future, and who, when an emergency arises and a crisis comes, can clear away the difficulties and reach a safe decision according to the exigencies of the occasion." Men of this moral calibre and character create a nation. Our University is proud to honour such a man today in JOSEPH ROBINETTE BIDEN Jr., 47<sup>th</sup> Vice President of the United States of America. Irish Catholic by birth, Democrat by choice, he was drawn to the law and to political activism by an irresistible call: the defence of civil rights. The voice of one of the youngest senators in American history was first raised in opposition to the war in Vietnam; to this day, his reservations about the use of armed force guide his unceasing efforts at 'ending the war', rather than human life – in Iraq, in Libya, in Afghanistan, and in so many other places in our tormented world. The exceptional expertise and energy of his life-long dedication to foreign affairs and to national security did not go unnoticed. Before taking up his current office, he had served the U.S. Senate for thirty-six years. As Chairman and senior member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he had a lasting impact on judicial appointments and foreign policy. Justice and liberalism are the hallmark of his work over four decades – remember, for example, his advocacy of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994 – and, as Vice President, fighting against income inequality and for fair trade, health care, public transport and reduction of military spending; forcefully promoting everyone's right to a job and a home; supporting equal opportunities and same-sex marriage (in his country and our own). John Adams called the Vice Presidency "the most insignificant office that ever the invention of man contrived"; you would not know it looking at this man, hailed as the most influential Vice President in history. He owes his accomplishments to his most distinctive quality: loyalty, to his President, to his people, and to his beliefs. His motto, 'Keep the faith, Joey,' has paid off. It has given him strength at every tragic juncture in his personal life. His first wife and baby daughter were killed in a car accident shortly before he was sworn in as Senator forty-three years ago. Last year, cancer cruelly robbed him of his elder son. In the face of the severest blows a man can receive in life, he never allowed himself to be knocked down: 'Get up' he says, 'get up'. He is a natural survivor and, as such, an incredible motivator. His President calls him 'America's happy warrior'. His strenuous nature is perhaps a legacy of his cherished Irish extraction, together with his strong sense of family, faith, and flair in verbal communication. It is hard to believe that as a child he was afflicted by a speech impediment, which he conquered with the same perseverance and success as Demosthenes, the champion of Greek democracy. Orators declaim; this orator talks — freely, frankly, familiarly — and he talks to you, yes, you, in a language that goes straight to the heart. Men of his standing have never been felt so close. Ask anyone in his constituency in Delaware: he is both a revered hero and a dear friend, 'one of us'. On this memorable day we, members of the University of Dublin, take immense pride in his acceptance of our highest recognition.