***Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship***

**teaching document on the political responsibility of Catholics ~ US Catholic Bishops**

**Bulletin Reflections - 2020**

**September 20**

**Catholics Care. Catholics Vote. Participate in political life.**|

In their statement on Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, the U.S. Catholic bishops remind Catholics about the call to participate in political life. "In the Catholic tradition," they write, "responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation" (no. 13). Visit [www.faithfulcitizenship.org](https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/index.cfm) today to read the statement, watch videos, and access other great resources to help us build a better society and world. **For reflection**: **What is the connection between our faith and the desire to change the world for the better?**

September 27

**Catholics Care. Catholics Vote. Register to vote for Election Day (November 3, 2020)**

In their statement on Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, the U.S. Catholic bishops remind Catholics, "We are called to bring together our principles and our political choices, our values and our votes, to help build a better world" (no. 14). In New York State, the voter registration deadline for the November 3 election is October 9. You can pick up a mail-in voter registration form at your county Board of Election (\*we will have mail-in forms in church) or onlinevoterreg.dmv.ny.gov/motorvoter. New York State allows early voting from October 24 through November 1. Contact your county Board of Election to apply for a *mail-in ballot* allowed for anyone concerned about COVID-19. **For reflection: What kinds of leaders does our society need? For what should they stand and how should they lead?**

\*delete this if voter registration forms will not be available in church

**October 4**

**Catholics Care. Catholics Vote.  Form your conscience.**

As we celebrate **Respect Life Sunday**, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the *Gospel of Life*, and continue to grow in our understanding of political engagement, we are reminded of Saint Pope John Paul II’s words that *human life finds itself most vulnerable when it enters the world and when it leaves the realm of time to embark upon eternity (Evangelium Vitae, 44)*.   As we challenge our political leaders to support the dignity of human life, let us all take responsibility to walk with those in need at critical moments of decision-making.     **Questions for reflection:** On the preeminent priority of abortion, as described by the U.S. Bishops in the introductory note of *Forming Consciences for* *Faithful Citizenship*, how can I work with political leaders to end the tragedy of abortion in my community?     How can I walk with moms-in-need this year to show that support for women and children in crisis is available?     For more information please go to [www.LifeRoc.org](http://www.LifeRoc.org).

October 11

**Parish Policy on Distribution of Campaign Materials**

During this election season, our parish will be utilizing materials from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship. Distribution of other election-related materials on church property will not be permitted. Among other activities, posting flyers or signs, passing out campaign literature, and leaving unauthorized materials anywhere in the building or on car windshields, are prohibited. We appreciate your cooperation with this policy.  **For reflection: Name the four principles and seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching. How can these principles and themes help us to think about policies and laws?**

**October 18**

**Catholics Care. Catholics Vote. Learn the issues.**

In their statement on Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, the U.S. Catholic bishops lift up various issues of different moral weight and urgency.  Some issues they mention include: abortion, euthanasia, the use of the death penalty and imprudent resort to war; protecting the fundamental understanding of marriage as the life-long and faithful union of one man and one woman; achieving comprehensive immigration reform; caring for our common home and addressing climate change; helping families and children overcome poverty; providing healthcare while respecting human life, human dignity and religious freedom; establishing and complying with moral limits on the use of military force.  In their 2018 pastoral against racism, the Bishops call us to be aware of the sin of racism and systemic racism in our society. Learn more about these issues and others at [www.faithfulcitizenship.org](http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org). **For reflection: What do the bishops mean when they say, "Both opposing evil and doing good are essential obligations"? Why are both (not just one or the other) important for Catholics?**

**October 25**

**Catholics Care. Catholics Vote. Practice civil dialogue.**

In their statement on Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, the U.S. Catholic bishops remind Catholics that we are called to engage in charitable, respectful and civil dialogue during election season. In a culture that is dominated by "partisan attacks, sound bites and media hype," the Church calls for a different kind of political engagement (no. 14). Visit [www.faithfulcitizenship.org](http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org/) to access resources on civil dialogue and on how our faith calls us to engage during election season and beyond. **For reflection: What is the role of the Church in political life?**

November 1

**Remember to Vote… Be a Faithful Citizen.**

As you prepare to vote this week, read the U.S. bishops' statement on Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, watch videos and access other great resources on faithful citizenship. Visit [www.faithfulcitizenship.org](http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org/) to explore how you can love your neighbors by advocating as a faithful citizen on behalf of those who are poor and vulnerable. **For reflection: Why do the bishops encourage all Catholics, whether able to vote or not, to be involved in political life? What are other ways, in addition to voting, that you can be involved in advocacy for important issues?**