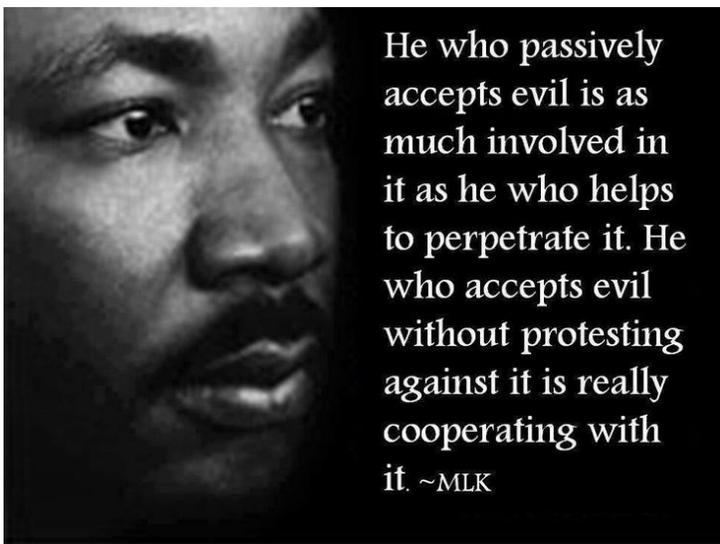


Mixing Politics and Religion

*In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and **participation in political life is a moral obligation**. ...This obligation is rooted in our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to bear Christian witness in all we do. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us, "It is necessary that all participate...in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person. . . . As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life" (nos. 1913-1915).*

***Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,**
The U.S. Bishops' Reflection on Catholic Teaching and Political Life*



He who passively
accepts evil is as
much involved in
it as he who helps
to perpetrate it. He
who accepts evil
without protesting
against it is really
cooperating with
it. ~MLK

Here in the Diocese of Rochester, we have a long tradition of encouraging parishioners to take part in legislative advocacy, in order to “promote the Common Good.” Each year our Diocesan Public Policy Committee chooses timely issues and asks parishes to focus on them. Together, thousands of people from across the diocese raise a chorus of voices speaking out for policies that respect and protect our sisters and brothers, especially the most vulnerable, and care for God’s Creation.

As we begin an election year here in the U.S., let’s bear in mind that, as the above quote from the bishops reminds us, we are called to participate in political life in a way that reflects Christ’s call to love our neighbor and build up His reign of justice and peace.

For some inspiration, [click](#) to hear Cardinal Timothy Dolan’s homily at the “Catholics at the Capitol” Mass in 2010, during which he said that religion and politics “go together as naturally as a hot dog and a bun.”

Keep Speaking Out for Children in Poverty: Public Policy Weekend February 6 & 7

The statistics on **childhood poverty** in our state and our nation are scandalous. As part of the Diocesan Public Policy Committee’s focus on this issue, parishes are being asked to gather petition signatures calling on state legislators to significantly increase funding for child care subsidies, for the Common Good.

In October, parishes signed petitions asking the Governor to include these increases in the 2016-2017 budget his administration submitted to the legislature. Now we are asking the legislators to ensure that funding is included in the final version of the budget on which they’ll be voting.

These subsidies make it possible for working poor families to find high quality child care for their children so they can remain in the workforce. No parent should have to choose between keeping a job and keeping her children safe. These subsidies not only allow parents to keep earning an income instead of spiraling downward into deeper poverty. They also provide children with the opportunity for stimulation and social interaction that helps to develop the intellect and social skills they’ll need to be successful in school and life.

Please ensure that your parish prints the bulletin notices, makes announcements from the pulpit and collects the signatures on the petition! Click [here](#) to access all those materials.

9 DAYS FOR LIFE

PRAYER • PENANCE • PILGRIMAGE

Join in the Novena
to end abortion and
to promote respect for life!

**Saturday January 16-
Sunday January 24**

January 22 marks the 43rd anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision. It's an appropriate time to reflect on how we can promote a culture of life through "Nine Days for Life", a novena of prayer, penance and reflection, from January 16-January 24. You can access the novena [here](#), and print it or receive it through e-mail, a downloadable app, or text messages on your phone. The novena includes prayers to end abortion, the death penalty, domestic violence and pornography, and prayers of support for children awaiting adoption.

To make the pilgrimage to the **March for Life** in Washington DC on January 22, contact our Diocesan Life Issues Coordinator Suzanne Stack at SSstack@dor.org or 585-328-3210 ext. 1304 Busses to the March are leaving from several places around the diocese. Pray for the march participants even if you can't attend!



It's coming..... believe it or not, **LENT will be here soon!**

Be ready for **Ash Wednesday, February 10**. Encourage your family and your parish to participate in the **Catholic Relief Service's Rice Bowl**.

Through the CRS Rice Bowl you can make your Lenten sacrifices even more meaningful. Donate the money you save by giving up snacks, restaurant meals, meat, coffee, dessert etc. The money collected in our Rice Bowls supports both local and international efforts to improve the lives of low income people.

At the Rice Bowl web site, www.crsricebowl.org you'll find meatless recipes, prayers, family activities, lessons for kids and teens, and a trove of other information on how participating in the Rice Bowl can make Lent more fruitful for you and your family. You'll also learn about five countries that are the special focus of Rice Bowl's educational component this year: **Colombia, Rwanda, Laos, Honduras and Madagascar**.

Your parish can learn more about CRS by inviting our specially trained CRS Global Fellows, Deacons Kevin Carges and Mark Robbins, to give presentations about their firsthand experience of CRS' work.

To learn more, contact our Diocesan CRS liaison Kathy Dubel at KDubel@dor.org or 607-734-9784 ext. 2135.

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