

Bulletin Blurbs on Voting and Moral Responsibility

Election Day is Coming -- Make Sure to Vote as a Catholic

We encourage *all citizens*, particularly Catholics, to embrace their citizenship not merely as a duty and privilege, but as an opportunity meaningfully to participate *in building the culture of life*. Every voice matters in the public forum. Every vote counts. Every act of responsible citizenship is an exercise of significant individual power. We must exercise that power in ways that defend human life, especially those of God's children who are unborn, disabled or otherwise vulnerable. We get the public officials we deserve. Their virtue -- or lack thereof -- is a judgment not only on them, but on us. Because of this, we urge our fellow citizens to *see beyond party politics, to analyze campaign rhetoric critically, and to choose their political leaders according to principle, not party affiliation or mere self-interest*.

-- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Living the Gospel of Life*.

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By fulfilling their civic duties, guided by a Christian conscience, in conformity with its values, the lay faithful exercise their proper task of infusing the temporal order with Christian values. . . . The consequence of this fundamental teaching of the Second Vatican Council is that the lay faithful are never to relinquish their participation in 'public life', that is, in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the common good.

-- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life*.

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The Church wishes to help form consciences in political life and to stimulate greater insight into the authentic requirements of justice as well as greater readiness to act accordingly, even when this might involve conflict with situations of personal interest. . . . The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice.

-- Pope Benedict, *God is Love*.

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As Catholics, we should be guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to a political party or interest group. When necessary, our participation should help transform the party to which we belong; we should not let the party transform us in such a way that we neglect or deny fundamental moral truths. We are called to bring together our principles and our political choices, our values and our votes, to help build a better world.

-- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*