



Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time October 5, 2014

Pastor's Column

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Faithful Citizenship—The General Election of Tuesday, November 4, 2014

In a few weeks, elections across our country and in our state will take place. Hopefully, all of us are beginning to prepare to vote by gathering information regarding the various candidates and the various propositions that are on the ballot.

Responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation...

By our baptism, Catholics are committed to following Jesus Christ and to be "salt for the earth, light for the nations."

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us, "It is necessary that all participate according to his position and role, in promoting the common good."

This 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*
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

In exercising "Faithful Citizenship," we are mindful that in the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue; participation in the political process is a moral obligation.

As Catholics, we never endorse any specific candidates nor do we endorse any specific political parties. And we are mindful that neither major party, the Republican Party nor the Democratic Party, is fully "Pro-life" in the Catholic Church's understanding of "Pro-life."

As we vote then for specific candidates, we need to be examining them through the Catholic lens of "Pro-life," and then, according to our conscience, vote for the candidates and party that exhibits best the "Pro-life" characteristics of the Catholic Church.

Always be mindful that no one can tell you how to vote! The Magisterium of the Church will inform you of what is the Catholic position, and encourage you to vote accordingly, but when you are in the voter's booth, you, in the presence of God, with an informed conscience, must vote according to the direction of your conscience.

Conscience is supreme, and it holds a most sacred place within Catholic Tradition.

Although the Catholic Church does not endorse specific political parties nor specific candidates, it does, at times, endorse specific propositions that may be on the ballot.

This year the California Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops has endorsed one of the propositions that will appear on the November ballot.

This position and the bishops' support of it will be discussed in the weeks to come.

Take time in the coming weeks to become an informed voter.

The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society... is proper to the lay faithful. As citizens of the State, they are called to take part in public life in a personal capacity. The mission of the lay faithful is therefore to configure social life correctly, respecting its legitimate autonomy and cooperating with other citizens according to their respective competencies and fulfilling their own responsibility.

—*Deus Caritas Est, #28*
Pope Benedict XVI, 2006

F. Mike