



Questions for Reflection or Conversation During an Election Season

How does your faith affect your views on issues facing your world? What is the relationship between your roles as a Catholic and as a citizen? How do you feel called to respond to issues you care about? Use the questions below to consider how you are called to respond. It might be helpful to talk about these questions with a trusted friend, family, or community member. Have ready a copy of *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, or find a [copy online](#) and read the suggested paragraphs as a way to inform your conversation.

What does it mean to be a “Faithful Citizen?”

Begin by reflecting on what it means to be a "faithful citizen." Would you call yourself one?

The Catholic Church teaches that all people are created in God's image and with dignity. One important reason for our political participation is to help ensure that the God-given dignity of all people is respected.

How might such a perspective affect your views and understanding of people around you and in the world who are suffering or vulnerable?

How does our faith influence our politics?

Read paragraphs 9 through 16 of *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*.

- What is the Church's role in politics? In what ways should it try to influence the political sphere?
- Why should people bring their religious beliefs into their political decisions and involvement?

How does your faith influence your perspectives about various issues?

“The Church’s obligation to participate in shaping the moral character of society is a requirement of our faith.

It is a basic part of the mission we have received from Jesus Christ, who offers a vision of life revealed to us in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.”

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,
no. 9

The role of Catholic Social Teaching

The four principles and seven themes of Catholic social teaching are summarized in paragraphs 40-56. Take a moment to review these paragraphs.

- Which of the principles or themes cited help you to see difficult issues in new ways?

- Which of these principles or themes do you think are most often forgotten in public discourse?

How do we form our consciences?

Read paragraphs 17-25 for more discussion on conscience formation. There is also a [helpful handout online](#).

- What goes into developing a person's conscience? What helped you develop your conscience in your own life?
- What is the relationship between conscience, the virtue of prudence, and your political decisions?
- How can "avoiding evil" and "doing good" be seen as two sides of a coin? Why are both necessary to be a "faithful citizen"?
- How do you personally act to reject evil and promote good?

Ideas for your community:

1. Address the moral and human dimensions of public issues.
2. Share church teaching on human life, human rights, and justice and peace.
3. Apply Catholic values to legislation and public issues.
4. Conduct a non-partisan voter registration drive on church property.

What issues mentioned in the document do you feel called to do something about?

Have you ever fallen into either of the two "temptations in public life" the bishops describe in paragraphs 27-29?

- Have you ever witnessed a situation in which one of these attitudes was present? What was the result of such ways of thinking?
- How do you think society, and politics, would change if all Catholics became committed to being "faithful citizens"?

How are you called to act?

As a result of your reflection and conversation, think about how you are called to uphold the life and dignity of all people through your role as a faithful citizen.

