



FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP
HOMILY NOTES
14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
July 3, 2016
“The Call to Participate”

Introduction

- Today’s readings help us reflect on God’s vision for how the world should be, and our role as Jesus’ disciples in helping make that vision a reality.
- When you look at the world around you, where do you see a need for restoration and renewal? What is your role—as a member of the local and global community, as an American, and as a person of faith—in restoring and renewing the world around you?

First Reading: Isaiah 66:10-14c

- In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah looks towards restoration, healing and comfort after a time of political turmoil in which God’s people experienced exile. In the previous chapter of the book of Isaiah, the prophet spoke of a world renewed (65:17) in which “no longer shall the sound of weeping be heard” (65:19), “no longer shall there be . . . an infant who lives but a few days, nor anyone who does not live a full lifetime” (65:20), and “the wolf and lamb shall pasture together” (65:25). The prophet Isaiah is proclaiming God’s vision of hope.
- God’s vision, which the prophet Isaiah shares, is relevant for our time and age as well. Take a moment to consider: when God looks at our world today, what do you think he sees? What might cause him joy? What situations facing the local or global community today might cause God sorrow? Where are we in need of restoration, healing, or peace? What vision might God have for us today?
- As Catholics and people of good will, we still yearn for a world that is closer to God’s vision, in which suffering, injustice, and war will be no more!

Responsorial Psalm: 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20 and Second Reading: Galatians 6:14-18

- Like the reading from Isaiah, Psalm 66 expresses hope at what God can do. “Say to God, ‘How tremendous are your deeds!’” (66:3), the Psalmist writes.
- Paul’s letter to the Galatians points to the “new creation” possible for all in Christ Jesus (6:15). His work and ministry testify to the transformation which is possible through Christ.

Gospel: Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

- Today’s Gospel reading is the mission of the seventy-two. Jesus *sends out* his disciples in pairs, urging them to be laborers for God’s harvest.



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- When we hear about the disciples, sent to proclaim God’s message, we may need a moment of reflection to hear Jesus’s words in our hearts in today’s world.
- The message of the Gospel is not only for the seventy-two; it is for all of us who call ourselves followers of Christ. We, too, are sent out. We, too, are called to be missionary disciples!

Application

- As we reflect on God’s vision of a restored and peaceful world, described by the prophet Isaiah, and as we reflect on our own role as missionary disciples, we are challenged to consider how we might be called to help make God’s vision a reality.
- In *Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis reminds us that we are all missionary disciples who are sent to change the world, transmit the values of our faith, and leave this earth “better than we found it.” He writes:

An authentic faith . . . always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it. We love this magnificent planet on which God has put us, and we love the human family which dwells here, with all its tragedies and struggles, its hopes and aspirations, its strengths and weaknesses. The earth is our common home and all of us are brothers and sisters. If indeed "the just ordering of society and of the state is a central responsibility of politics," the Church, "cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 183).

- This theme of faith-filled participation is taken up by the United States Catholic bishops in their statement on political responsibility, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*. They point to Pope Francis’ words to remind us that working to transform the world around us is part of “our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to bear Christian witness in all we do” (no. 13).
- An important way to do this is through our participation in the public square. The bishops give a number of examples of how we can participate:
 - o “running for office”
 - o “working within political parties”
 - o “communicating [our] concerns and positions to elected officials”
 - o “joining diocesan social mission or advocacy networks [and] state Catholic conference initiatives”
 - o “joining...community organizations,” and
 - o “other efforts to apply authentic moral teaching in the public square” (no. 16).
- The ability to participate, the bishops remind us, is not only open to those who can vote, but to all people, since everyone has the “right to have their voices heard on issues that affect their lives and the common good” (no. 16)

Conclusion

- This week, we look forward to celebrating the Fourth of July.
- Unlike some places in the world, we have the ability, as Americans, to take an active role in political life without fear of danger or intimidation.



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- Furthermore, it is our responsibility both as members of a democratic society, and as people of faith!
- Participation in the public square is one way we can help make God’s vision—of peace, restoration, and right relationship—become reality on this earth. We must work together to transform the world around us.
- What is one way you will do so today? Who will you team up with?

Bulletin Announcement

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 today to read the statement and access resources to help you engage.

Bulletin Insert

On July 2-3 weekend, parishes may also wish to use one of the two bulletin insert (also en Español) summarizing *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, which can be found at www.faithfulcitizenship.org.



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