



FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP
HOMILY NOTES
32ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
November 6, 2016
“Our Commitment to Faithful Citizenship”

Introduction

- We are in our last few days before the presidential elections. The previous months have been filled with speeches, debates and campaign ads.
- Today’s Scripture readings are perfectly timed, a breath of fresh air to remind us that God is the center of our existence; that his vision for us is one of hope; and that he loves us and cares about the difficulties and challenges we face.
- The readings also remind us that the love of God that we experience requires from us a response of love.

First Reading: 2 Maccabees 7:1-2, 9-14

- In the first reading, we hear the story of the martyrdom of a mother and her seven sons.
- Their courage and faith remind us that God is at the center of our experience. They also inspire us to reflect on how our experiences of the Father’s love can propel us to take grace-filled action.

Second Reading: 2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5

- In the second reading, Paul seeks to “encourage” and “strengthen” the Thessalonians (2:17), and he prays, “May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the endurance of Christ” (3:5).
- The Thessalonians’ actions to “speed forward” and glorify “the word of God” (3:1) flow from the love of God present in them.

Gospel: Luke 20:27-38

- In the Gospel reading, Jesus’ instruction about marriage is based in these words in the reading’s final line: “he is not God of the dead, but of the living” (v. 38).

Application

- Today’s readings remind us that God loves us and is present and active in our lives.
- This love requires a response. The U.S. Catholic bishops write in *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, quoting Pope Francis and the Gospel of Mark, “Love compels us ‘to “go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mk 16:15)’” (*Evangelii Gaudium [Joy of the Gospel]*, no. 181).



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- Pope Francis reminds us that being people of faith means that we recognize and experience the “inseparable bond between our acceptance of the message of salvation and genuine fraternal love . . . God’s word teaches that our brothers and sisters are the prolongation of the incarnation for each of us: ‘As you did it to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it to me’ (Mt 25:40)” (*Evangelii Gaudium* [*Joy of the Gospel*], no. 179).
- Receiving God’s love requires that we extend love to our brothers and sisters, whom God loves. What an appropriate reminder for us as we approach the elections this week.
- In their statement on *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, the U.S. Catholic bishops highlight a number of pressing issues that affect our neighbors (nos. 64-92). Some of these include:
 - Addressing abortion and other threats to life and dignity, such as euthanasia, the use of the death penalty, and imprudent resort to war;
 - Protecting the fundamental understanding of marriage as the life-long and faithful union of one man and one woman and as the central institution of society;
 - Achieving comprehensive immigration reform;
 - Caring for God’s creation, our common home;
 - Helping families and children overcome poverty;
 - Providing healthcare while respecting human life, human dignity and religious freedom; and
 - Establishing and complying with moral limits on the use of military force.
- As Catholics, we believe that “responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation” (*Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, no. 13).
- By voting, we can put love for God and neighbor into action by caring for the needs of those who are most vulnerable in our society: the unborn, the poor, the unemployed, the elderly, the homeless, and the immigrant. They need us to act on their behalf.
- Put your faith in action by voting this Tuesday. But remember that Catholics’ responsibility to be involved in political life does not end after the elections. You can be involved by serving those in need, advocating on their behalf, working to change unjust policies, or even running for office yourself.
- In the bulletin this week, there is a link to the United States Catholic bishops’ statement, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, as well as their website, www.faithfulcitizenship.org. I encourage you to visit the website today for ideas on how you can be a faithful citizen year round!



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Bulletin Announcement

Remember to Vote... Be a Faithful Citizen.

Visit www.faithfulcitizenship.org to explore how you can love your neighbors by advocating as a faithful citizen on behalf of those who are poor and vulnerable. As you prepare to vote this week, read the U.S. bishops' statement on *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, watch videos and access other great resources on faithful citizenship.

Bulletin Insert

On November 5-6 weekend, parishes may also wish to use one of several bulletin inserts (also en Español) available at www.faithfulcitizenship.org.



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