



THE CHURCH AND POLITICS: WHAT IS OUR ROLE?

“Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.”

—Matthew 25:45



In the Gospel, Catholics are commanded to love their neighbor and to serve “the least among them,” which can be done in many ways. One significant way to respond to this call is to participate in the shaping of laws and structures that affect people’s everyday lives. Creating a just and loving society is a vital part of the Catholic response to God’s commandment to love one’s neighbors. In the document *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, the Church teaches it is the responsibility of each Catholic to impact the moral character of society and participate in public life.

When the founding fathers began taking steps to create the American Constitution, they recognized the importance of fostering a society that valued religious freedom. They were careful not to promote one religion over another, which allowed all religious beliefs to have a place in the public square. As a result, the Catholic Church’s participation in the public policy process brings an important voice to the table that needs to be heard, one which promotes a consistent moral framework and broad experience of charitable service to the discussions. In order for government to function as it is intended to, citizens must participate in the formation of government and laws, especially faithful Catholics.

HOW CAN CATHOLICS LIVE OUT THEIR FAITH IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS?

1. **Sign up for the Catholic Advocacy Network** to learn about policy impacting the common good and to communicate with elected officials about these issues at www.micatholic.org/can/.
2. **Register to vote** or organize a voter registration drive. As a Catholic and a citizen, participation in democracy is a key responsibility.
3. Reflect upon Catholic Social Teaching and **vote with your conscience** concerning candidate elections and issue proposals. To learn more about how, visit www.faithfulcitizenship.org.
4. **Encourage your church to hold debate nights or bring in a speaker** to become more informed about Catholic teaching on issues such as religious liberty, human life and dignity, economic justice, health care, and immigration.
5. **Participate in community forums.**
6. **Arrange a faith sharing group** to discuss faithful citizenship and pray for the common good.
7. When participating in service projects, **think about the root causes** of the problems you are trying to address. Ask yourself if there are opportunities to change those conditions.

CAN is an outreach of the Michigan Catholic Conference, the official public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Michigan

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