



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What kinds of leaders does our society need? For what should they stand and how should they lead?
2. Why do the bishops encourage all Catholics, whether able to vote or not, to be involved in political life? What are other ways, in addition to voting, that you can be involved in advocacy for important issues?
3. How might public policies and laws be different if the moral principles from Faithful Citizenship were used as a basis for political decisions?
4. What is conscience? What is prudence? How does one develop a well-formed conscience and the virtue of prudence? What role should they play in our decisions about who we vote for and how we advocate for change? (For help, see nos. 17-20.)

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GOING DEEPER

1. What do the bishops mean when they say, "Both opposing evil *and* doing good are essential obligations" (no. 24)? Why are both (not just one or the other) important for Catholics? What are examples of intrinsic evils and why must they always be opposed? What are examples of supporting the common good? (For help, see nos. 21-25.) What might your own actions to avoid evil and to do good look like?
2. Some people question whether religion and politics should ever interact. What do the bishops say in response to this criticism? What is the role of the Church in political life? (For help, see nos. 5 and 9-12.)
3. Name the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching. How can these principles help us to think about policies and laws? Name some of the issues discussed in the statement and describe how the CST principles relate to these issues. (See nos. 44-56.)
4. What do the bishops mean when they refer to "formal cooperation in grave evil"? (See nos. 34-35.)

5. What advice might you give to a friend who is trying to decide between two candidates, neither of which fully share the Church's commitment to the dignity of the human person? (For help, see nos. 34-37.)
6. The bishops describe two "temptations in public life" that voters can fall into: first, "moral equivalence" which "makes no ethical distinctions between different kinds of issues involving human life and dignity," and second, the misuse of moral distinctions "as a way of dismissing or ignoring other serious threats to human life and dignity." (See nos. 27-29.) Describe a situation in which you witnessed one or both of these lines of thought. Why are they both distortions of the Church's teaching?

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