

A CALL TO INFORMED PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

September 8, 2020

The Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
The Twelfth Anniversary of my installation as Bishop of Wilmington

Dear Friends in Christ,

Each of us are called as Catholics and as citizens to active participation in the political process. This means that we must learn about the issues and where each candidate and party stand on them, and vote for those candidates we believe will advance our common good. It is one very important way for us to answer Christ's call to be salt of the earth and light of the world and to let our light shine before others. (Matt 5: 13-16) It is a requirement of our faith that is protected by our country's Constitution.

It is incumbent on each of us to research the candidates for national, statewide, and local offices to see if their stance on issues are in keeping with our values and the teachings of our Church. Do they, in word and policy, uphold the dignity of every human person? As Catholics, our preeminent priority is to protect the right to life. Do they support the restriction of, and ultimately bringing to an end, the destruction of unborn children through abortion; and strongly oppose euthanasia and the death penalty? Do they show care for the poor, sick, and marginalized that reflect Gospel values? Are they open to choice in education to help underprivileged children break the cycle of poverty? Do they attack racial bias, hatred, and injustice? Do they support religious freedom in all matters, especially in health care?

I urge you to read *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility*, the U.S. Bishops' teaching document on the political responsibilities of Catholics. It offers excellent guidance as we exercise our rights and duties as participants in democracy. To read this important document: [Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship](https://www.usccb.org/offices/justice-peace-human-development/forming-consciences-faithful-citizenship), use this link: <https://www.usccb.org/offices/justice-peace-human-development/forming-consciences-faithful-citizenship>.

During this contentious election season, it would be easy for us to throw our hands up in exasperation and retreat to the sidelines. However, that would be in direct contradiction to our responsibilities. If we don't bring civility and Christian values into the public arena, who will?

I ask that you join me and Catholics from across Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore in praying the Litany of St. Thomas More, Martyr, and Patron Saint of Statesmen, Politicians and Lawyers, after all Masses in the Diocese the weekend of October 31 and November 1.

May God bless you and God bless America.



Most Reverend W. Francis Malooly
Bishop of Wilmington

