

Pastor's Page – October 18, 2020

Early voting begins this week in Louisiana. I thought it might be helpful to put together some resources.

1. In their statement on *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, the U.S. Catholic bishops urge Catholics to form their consciences through being open to truth, studying Scripture and Church teaching, examining facts and background information, and prayerful reflection (no. 18). Visit FaithfulCitizenship.org to learn about the steps you can take to form your conscience, watch videos and access other great resources on conscience formation for faithful citizens. To quote the document and Pope Francis (no. 13):

In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. "People in every nation enhance the social dimension of their lives by acting as committed and responsible citizens" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 220). The obligation to participate in political life is rooted in our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to bear Christian witness in all we do. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us, "It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person. . . . As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life" (nos. 1913-1915).

2. The Archdiocese of New Orleans has launched an informational campaign to educate Catholics on their responsibility to exercise their right to vote with a properly formed conscience. At the outset, Archbishop Aymond reiterates the longstanding policy that, "(N)o member of the Catholic bishops, priests, deacons, religious, or laity in church leadership may endorse or oppose any candidate for office." <https://nolacatholic.org/vote> is a link to the archdiocese's documents, which are based on the principles laid out in *Faithful Citizenship*. A booklet from the archdiocese can be found at the entrances to the church.

The archdiocese is also hosting a series of webinars entitled, "Conversations Around the Social Mission of the Church." The remaining sessions are on Oct. 29, Nov. 19, and Dec. 10. Please go to <https://nolacatholic.org/events/catholic-social-teaching-series> to see the full list of topics and registration information.

3. In an age when politics have become so polarized, it can be difficult to discuss the issues. The Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States has produced a document, "Contemplation and Political Action: An Ignatian Guide to Civic Engagement." Holy Name of Jesus will be hosting a Zoom-based discussion of the guide on Wednesday, October 28 at 7 p.m. Please sign up at <https://forms.gle/d78ypXVwR46wpc2UA>. We hope to get a good response for this event so we can have the tools to engage in fruitful, life-giving conversations.