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## Editor's Notes | Civility

# Have you Done your Homework for the Upcoming Elections?

BY KATHLEEN BAGG

**WITH POLITICAL PRIMARIES** occurring in several states, the U.S. Catholic Bishops at their November 2023 Assembly, approved supplementary materials for the document *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, a teaching document on the political responsibility of Catholics. The statement provides guidance for Catholics in the exercise of their rights and duties as participants in our democracy.

The Catholic bishops identify the four main principles of the church's social teaching and apply them to some concrete issues. This is not to tell the faithful for whom or against to vote, but instead to help them form their consciences by God's truth as they approach this often-challenging decision.

As we approach the elections, the bishops urge pastors, lay and religious faithful, and all people of goodwill to use this statement to help form their consciences; to teach those entrusted to their care; to contribute to civil and respectful public dialogue; and to shape political choices in the coming election in light of Catholic teaching. The statement "lifts up our dual heritage as both faithful Catholics and American citizens with rights and duties as participants in the civil order," the bishops said.

## Civilize It: A Better Kind of Politics


In addition to their document on *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops launched a campaign in 2020 inviting Catholics to model civility and love for neighbor throughout the year. *Civilize It: A Better Kind of Politics* is a response to Pope Francis' invitation to seek the truth, build bridges and find solutions together that promote the common good. Catholics are invited to take the pledge and find resources at [CivilizeIt.org](http://CivilizeIt.org).

*Faithful Citizenship* is available in English by visiting [faithfulcitizenship.org](http://faithfulcitizenship.org) and visit [cuidanosfieles.org](http://cuidanosfieles.org) for the Spanish version.

## Florida Catholic Advocacy Network

While the Florida Legislature is still in session, I want to draw your attention to the Florida Catholic Advocacy Network or FLCAN. It is a statewide, online community established by the bishops of Florida to connect, educate and mobilize Catholics across Florida's seven dioceses on public policy issues pertaining to life, dignity and the common good. FLCAN provides the opportunity to speak on behalf of the poor, the disabled, the sick or dying, the unborn, the elderly, families and children, immigrants, the imprisoned and others in need. By raising our voices together, we strengthen the presence of the Catholic faithful in the public square.

## Subscribe for free to FLCAN and you will receive via email:

- Action alerts on key bills at both the state and federal levels that allow for quick and easy messaging to elected officials.
- Reports, summaries and educational materials that identify legislative proposals affecting issues important to our faith.
- Calls to prayer for the people of our state and nation, and our elected leaders. 



### LEARN MORE

To join the Florida Catholic Advocacy Network, visit [www.flaccb.org/join-flcan](http://www.flaccb.org/join-flcan).