



May 28, 2024

### Faithful and Civil Political Engagement

As the 2024 election season begins, we encourage all Catholics to serve as ambassadors of civility and to exercise our right and responsibility of political engagement prayerfully, thoughtfully and in accordance with our faith-beliefs to promote the common good and the dignity and sanctity of every life.

Each election year, we must remember to:

Never let evil talk pass your lips; say only the good things men need to hear, things that will really help them. Do nothing that will sadden the Holy Spirit with whom you were sealed against the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, all passion and anger, harsh words, slander, and malice of every kind. In place of these, be kind to one another, compassionate, and mutually forgiving, just as God has forgiven you in Christ (Eph. 4:29-32).

With these words of wisdom from St. Paul, we encourage you to engage respectfully with others to improve civil dialogue and our entire political system.

We are privileged to live in a nation which sees participation in free and fair elections as a right. With that right comes a responsibility to exercise our vote by first forming our individual consciences to make well-reasoned decisions grounded in our faith. This is not a quick or easy process, and our voting decisions can be difficult to make. But taking the time to review and reflect on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' [\*Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship\*](#) allows each of us to base our votes in faith, rather than political rhetoric, and promote the good of all our brothers and sisters to the best of our ability.

We must also set a better example for political discourse than we see in all forms of media and increasingly from candidates. Our discourse should begin with listening and prayer, especially when we disagree. As the bishops at the Second Vatican Council urged Catholics: "Respect and love ought to be extended also to those who think or act differently than we do in social, political and even religious matters. In fact, the more deeply we come to understand their ways of thinking through such courtesy and love, the more easily will we be able to enter into dialogue with them" (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 28). Dialogue helps us to better understand one another and the potential moral, social, political and economic ramifications of our political decisions.

We invite you to spend time with *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* and to recommit with Catholics across the United States to the [Civilize It](#) campaign. As you may recall from the


2020 presidential election year, Civilize It involves taking the pledge below to promote civility, love our neighbors, and build community.

I PLEDGE:


1. Civility – To recognize the human dignity of those with whom I disagree, treat others with respect, and rise above attacks when directed at me.
2. Clarity – To root my political viewpoints in the Gospel and a well-formed conscience, which involves prayer, conversation, study and listening. I will stand up for my convictions and speak out when I witness language that disparages others' dignity, while also listening and seeking to understand others' experiences.
3. Compassion – To encounter others with a tone and posture which affirms that I honor the dignity of others and invites others to do the same. I will presume others' best intentions and listen to their stories with empathy. I will strive to understand before seeking to be understood.

For resources to help you share the Civilize It pledge with your family, friends and parish, visit [A Better Kind of Politics | Civilize It | USCCB](#).

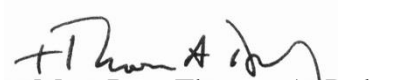
In the heart of Christ,



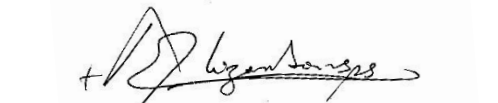
Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne  
Archbishop of Seattle




Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson  
Bishop of Yakima



Most Rev. Thomas A. Daly  
Bishop of Spokane



Most Rev. Eusebio Elizondo, M.Sp.S.  
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle



Most Rev. Frank Schuster  
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle