



REFLECTIONS ON CHOOSING POLITICAL CANDIDATES

WALKING WITH GOD

“We take up the task of serving the common good with joy and hope, confident that God, who “so loved the world that he gave his only Son,” walks with us and strengthens us on the way (Jn 3:16). God is love, and he desires that we help to build a “civilization of love”—one in which all human beings have the freedom and opportunity to experience the love of God and live out that love by making a free gift of themselves to one another.” [Introduction, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship](#)

RESPECTFUL, THOUGHTFUL AND CIVIL DIALOGUE

“For some years now, many of us in the Catholic and other faith communities have been lamenting the disintegration of civility and substance from one major national election to the next.... I invite everyone to take the pledge to promote civility, clarity and compassion this election season. You can do so by going to www.CivilizeIt.us, where you will also find simple tips to create respectful dialogue.” *Most Rev. Dennis Schnurr, Archbishop of Cincinnati, 2017*

PRUDENTIAL DISCERNMENT

“The Church’s teaching is clear that a good end does not justify an immoral means. As we all seek to advance the common good—by defending the inviolable sanctity of human life from the moment of conception until natural death, by promoting religious freedom, by defending marriage, by feeding the hungry and housing the homeless, by welcoming the immigrant and protecting the environment—it is important to recognize that not all possible courses of action are morally acceptable. We have a responsibility to discern carefully which public policies are morally sound. Catholics may choose different ways to respond to compelling social problems, but we cannot differ on our moral obligation to help build a more just and peaceful world through morally acceptable means, so that the weak and vulnerable are protected and human rights and dignity are defended.” [#20 Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship](#)

What is the candidate’s commitment to protect all human life, from conception to natural death?

What is the candidate’s commitment to addressing threats to marriage and family, as understood by the Church, as well as other serious threats to human life and dignity such as racism and other unjust discrimination, the use of the death penalty, resorting to unjust war, the use of torture, war crimes, the failure to respond to those who are suffering from hunger or a lack of health care, or an unjust immigration policy?

How does the candidate measure up in both words and actions with the totality of Catholic Social Teaching?

What would be morally grave reasons to support and/or oppose a candidate? (Please refer to the U.S. Bishops document *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, [paragraphs 34 through 37](#)).

What is my assessment of the candidate’s personal integrity, governing philosophy, performance and ability to influence a given issue?

Has the candidate demonstrated sufficient competency to hold such an elected position?

Examining party platforms in light of Catholic teaching may be a helpful consideration, especially when a voter faces a dilemma in a voting choice.