



DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

Office of the Bishop

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we approach our national elections in November, I write to encourage you to participate in the electoral process. As Catholics, we are reminded to use the values of our faith to shape our political life. Earlier this year, through a series of parish bulletin inserts, I asked all the faithful to reflect on the U.S. Catholic Bishops' statement, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship", especially within the framework of the key themes of Catholic Social Teaching.

In the current election process, it is my hope that you will reflect on the long tradition of the Catholic Church in promoting respect for life at all stages, especially the unborn. Each individual has a right to the basic goods that every human person needs to live and thrive. Pope John Paul II reminded us of this fundamental teaching when he said "...the common outcry, justly made on behalf of human rights – for example the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture – is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination" (Christifidelis Laici, no. 38).

Catholic teaching challenges us to consider the moral and ethical dimensions of public policy. As Catholics, we have a special concern for the dignity of life and for what protects or threatens human life. Let us work together to build a world where there is respect for all human life, born and unborn, and where justice flourishes.

I invite you to learn more about Catholic teachings as it relates to areas of current legislation by visiting Catholic Voice NC at www.catholicvoicenc.org. May the Immaculate Heart of Mary protect the dignity of life for all who are vulnerable, especially the unborn.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Raleigh