

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 13, 2020



SAINTS CYRIL AND
METHODIUS PARISH

FARNOST SVÄTÝCH
CYRILA A METODA



A Personal Parish Established To Serve The Slovak Catholic Community In The Archdiocese Of Detroit



24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



Peter approached Jesus and asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times." - Mt 18:21-22

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

©LPI

41233 Ryan Road, Sterling Heights, MI 48314 • (586) 726-6911 • Fax: (586) 685-1070 • www.saintcyrils.church

MASS *Intentions*

©JPPC

September 12, Saturday – Sobota

- 9:00AM **Mass Inside Church** * For the Members of O. L. Mother of Mercy Secular Discalced Carmelites
❖ For Fr. Ben Kosnac ❖ For Grace Avery (B'Day)
- 5:30PM **Outdoor Mass** * For the Holy Souls in Purgatory
❖ For Nedhal Aziz ❖ For Renee Dzieciolowski
❖ For Karen Miller (B'Day)
❖ For Chris & Courtney DePerro (5th Wed. Ann.)
❖ For the Gammo & Gill Families ❖ †Adam Johnson

September 13, 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Nedela

- 7:30AM **Mass Inside Church** * In Thanksgiving req. Kola Peter Gojcaj ❖ For Pam Mulligan & Family ❖ For Kevin Aziz
❖ For Constance Beste (B'Day)
❖ For the Menard and Daniel Families
❖ For the Makarewicz Family ❖ †Walter Bzdera
❖ †Richard Walczyk req. Daphne Johnson
❖ †Roslyn Black ❖ †Shirley J. Robinson

10:00AM (English/Slovak) Outdoor Mass

*Special Bilingual Holy Mass & Benediction of the Anniversary Cross

- In Thanksgiving req. Kola Peter Gojcaj
❖ For the Holy Souls in Purgatory
❖ For a Special Intention req. Kola Peter Gjočaj
❖ For the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima
❖ For Chris Weil (B'Day) ❖ For Andrew Melnyk
❖ For Joy Wilkins (B'Day) ❖ For Rachel Militio
❖ For Brian & Lisa Koziol & Fam.
❖ For William & Theresa Melnyk
❖ For Paul & Julie Varchetti and Family
❖ For Edward & Mary Kelly ❖ †Robert Nowak Jr.
❖ For Anna & †Paul Magusin ❖ †Julia Mary Gulas
❖ †Virginia Pierce req. Cindy & Dennis Zitny
❖ †Karen Jordan ❖ †Bill & Beverly Young

6:00PM (Tridentine) Mass Inside Church

For Fr. Paul Czarnota req. RoseAnn Lebioda

8:30PM Outdoor Mass * For the Intentions of All Parishioners

September 14, Monday – Pondelok

Feast of the Exultation of the Holy Cross

- 9:00AM **Mass Inside Church** * For the Holy Souls in Purgatory
❖ †Margaret Hernalsteen ❖ For David Schefke (B'Day)
- 12:00PM **Mass Inside Church**
†Rev. Richard Polakowski req. Shirley Polakowski
❖ †Margaret Hernalsteen ❖ †Stefan Korytowski

September 15, Tuesday – Utorok

*** Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows ***

- 6:00AM **Outdoor Mass**
For the Holy Souls in Purgatory ❖ For Christopher Halabu (B'Day) ❖ †Andrew & Julia Paska
- 12:00PM **Mass Inside Church**
For the Holy Souls in Purgatory
❖ For John Fuller ❖ †Matthew Margiewicz

September 16, Wednesday – Streda

- 9:00AM **Mass Inside Church**
For Joseph & Deni Kasneci ❖ For the McIntyre Family
❖ †Mary Klebans
- 12:00PM **Mass Inside Church**
For Julius Aziz ❖ †Janan Rabban
❖ †Danyal & Badriya Bakko

September 17, Thursday – Štvrtok

- 6:00AM **Outdoor Mass**
For Henry Parker ❖ For Sara Funk
❖ For Katherine Giannone (Bap. Ann.)
- 12:00PM **Mass Inside Church**
†Oliver G. Nash req. Sharon Brown
❖ †Vicky Sale (B'Day)
❖ †Lawrence & Christine Chominski
- 7:00PM **Mass Inside Church**
For Seminarian Patrick Blenman
❖ For Donna Badudzinski (B'Day) ❖ †Mary Klebans

September 18, Friday – Piatok

- 6:00AM **Outdoor Mass**
For Madelyn Weil (B'Day) ❖ For Nedhal Aziz
❖ †Mary Klebans ❖ †Adalina Pano
- 12:00PM **Mass Inside Church**
For Ibrahim Aziz ❖ For Kola Peter Gojcaj
❖ †Virginia Pierce ❖ †Natale Mangano (B'Day)
❖ †Cristina Cambare

September 19, Saturday – Sobota

- 9:00AM **Mass Inside Church**
For Tim & Victoria Roddy & Family
❖ For Mariam Aziz ❖ †Cristina Cambara
- 5:30PM **Outdoor Mass**
For President Trump ❖ For Fr. Luigi & All Priests
❖ For Mary Ann Ceniza ❖ For Catie & Family
❖ For Brian Dabrowski & Dabrowski Foster Children
❖ For Diane Meyer ❖ †Wafa Kassab

September 20, 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Nedela

Is 55:6-9; Phil 1:20c-24, 27a; Mt 20:1-16a (133)

- 7:30AM **Mass Inside Church**
For a Special Intention req. Vicki Babbie
❖ For a Special Intention req. Sam Gill
❖ For Constance Beste ❖ †Jim Olinzock
❖ †George Maroni ❖ †Edward Schoener
❖ †Ralph & Janet Reising ❖ †Mary Klebans
❖ †Richard Walczyk req. Daphne Johnson
❖ †John & Geraldine Chrustowski
- 9:30AM **Outdoor Mass**
For the Souls in Purgatory
❖ †Vernon W. Davenport
❖ For Brian & Lisa Koziol & Family
❖ For Andrew Melnyk
❖ For William & Theresa Melnyk
❖ For the Vitale & Monsu Families ❖ †Marge Santioni
❖ †Virginia Pierce req. Cindy & Dennis Zitny
- 11:30AM (Slovak) **Mass Inside Church**
In Thanksgiving Kola Peter Gjočaj
❖ For Mark Varchetti ❖ For Ernest & Maria Gaiera
❖ For Glen & Amy Varchetti and Family
❖ For George & Helen Emmendorfer
❖ †Julia Gulas ❖ †Ken Kern
- 6:00PM (Tridentine) **Mass Inside Church**
For the Intentions of All Parishioners
- 8:30PM **Outdoor Mass**
For Monir & Alia Korkis & Family ❖ For Kevin Aziz
❖ For the Meyou Sisters
❖ †Brian Czach req. Rita
❖ †Sam Kassab ❖ †Neran Garmo ❖ †Tom Garmo



24th Sunday in Ordinary Time • September 13, 2020

Jesus Christ, The High Priest

Fr. Libor Marek, Pastor • lmarek@saintcyrils.church

Fr. Juraj Nuota, Associate Pastor • jnuota@saintcyrils.church

Deacon Phil McCown • wadephil@yahoo.com

Deacon Gerald Smigell • vgsmigell@gmail.com

Parish Office • parishoffice@saintcyrils.church

New Weekday Mass & Office Schedule Beginning Monday, September 14:

WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 14:

MONDAYS: 9AM (Indoor) & 12PM (Indoor)

TUESDAYS: 6AM (Outdoor) & 12PM (Indoor)

WEDNESDAYS: 9AM (Indoor) & 12PM (Indoor)

THURSDAYS: 6AM (Outdoor), 12PM (Indoor) & 7PM (Indoor)

FRIDAYS: 6AM (Outdoor) & 12PM (Indoor)

WEEKDAY OFFICE SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 14:

MONDAYS: 10AM - 2PM

TUESDAYS: 11AM - 2PM

WEDNESDAYS: 10AM - 2PM

THURSDAYS: 11AM - 5PM

FRIDAYS: 11AM - 2PM

*CONFESSION SCHEDULE:

Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 10:30AM - 11:30AM & Tuesday & Thursday: 6:00PM - 7:00PM

Registration Forms for Confession are Available on the Parish Website: www.saintcyrils.church

Confessions are outdoors. Please wear a face mask.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: EVERY THURSDAY: 1:00PM - 7:00PM (in the Church)



CSA 2020

Dear Parishioners: The unprecedented situation of 2020 has brought many challenges to our Parish. It has forced us to put out into deep waters and undergo harsh tests. Many external support systems have been lost, but hopefully our faith has come through more genuine and stronger than before.

Now is the time to stand up and continue living our faith within our families, parishes, and in society at large. There are many ways in which each of us can be involved in the mission of the Church, through active participation in the various ministries in our Parish. Moreover, many ministries, services, and programs are coordinated on the diocesan level. These benefit not only all Catholics, but they also allow all people to hear the good news and be touched by God's love.

As with every year, our shepherd, Archbishop Vigneron, is asking the faithful of the Archdiocese of Detroit to support the Catholic Services Appeal for 2020. The many programs and ministries (priestly formation, evangelization, Catholic schools, family, pro-life...) benefit thousands in Southeast Michigan. These are substantial components of the mission of our Church and they are everyone's responsibility.

The goal set for our Parish this year is \$156,616 (compared to \$192,200 in 2019). This goal reflects the overall trend of our offertory income over the past three years, plus an adjustment of -15% due to the pandemic situation and economic hardship.

From the financial perspective, every donation to the Parish is taxed at a 7% rate by the Archdiocese of Detroit, and only the remaining 93% can be used by the Parish. The CSA collection, however, offers us a unique opportunity to make our financial contributions count 100% entirely for use by the Parish. Moreover, once we reach the mandatory goal, any overage is credited to the Parish at the same 100% rate.

We have been blessed with many generous parishioners in the past and our Parish was able to reach the CSA goal last year. Given the current economic and financial situation, many people will have less flexibility to donate as in the past, and they therefore deserve more gratitude for their generosity. Please, prayerfully consider supporting the 2020 CSA and make your gift count for our Parish. If you are unable to contribute, please, continue praying for the mission of the Church, of which we are all a part. *Fr. Libor Marek*

~~~~~

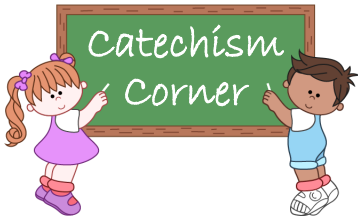
Počas roku 2020, keď sa zrútili mnohé vonkajšie opory, naša viera prešla testom a snád z neho vyšla pevnejšia a čistejšia. Teraz je čas vieru znova žiť v našich rodinách, farnostiach a vo verejnom živote. Naša farnosť ponúka mnohé možnosti zapojiť sa do poslania Cirkvi – nežiť pre seba, ale pre druhých a tak šíriť Božie kráľovstvo. Mnohé programy a aktivity nie je možné konať na farskej, ale na diecéznej úrovni. Profitujú z nich nielen katolíci, ale všetci ľudia môžu zakúsiť dotyk Božej lásky.

Tak ako každý rok, náš pastier, arcibiskup Vigneron žiada všetkých veriacich diecézy o podporu zbierky CSA (Catholic Services Appeal). Vďaka nej sa financujú mnohé programy (formácia a vzdelávanie kňazov, evanjelizácia, katolícke školy, podpora rodín a manželstiev, pro-life...), ktoré slúžia mnohým ľuďom v Michigane. Sú to podstatné prvky poslania Cirkvi a my všetci sme za ne zodpovední.

Tento rok máme dosiahnuť cieľ vo výške \$156,616 (v roku 2019 to bolo \$192,200). Tento cieľ reflektuje trend našich farských financií za posledné 3 roky a zároveň je znížený o -15% vzhľadom na pandémie a ekonomickú situáciu.

Z finančného hľadiska, každý príspevok pre farnosť je zdanený 7% pre Diecézu a iba zvyšných 93% môže byť použitých pre farnosť. CSA zbierka nám ponúka jedinečnú možnosť započítať 100% vášho príspevku v prospech farnosti. Okrem toho, keď dosiahneme náš povinný cieľ, všetko ostatné sa vráti do farnosti vo výške 100%.

Už v minulosti sme mali mnoho štedrých ľudí a vďaka nim sme v roku 2019 náš cieľ dosiahli. Vzhľadom na tohoročnú finančnú a ekonomickú situáciu budú mnohí ľudia mať menej možností prispieť. O to viac si zaslúžia vďačnosť. Ak vám to je možné, prosím, prispajte do tejto zbierky. Váš dar sa počíta v prospech našej farnosti. Ak nemôžete prispieť, prosím, modlite sa za Cirkev a všetkých jej členov, aby vždy ostala verná svojmu poslaniu. *Fr. Libor Marek*



### Catechism Classes Begin • Wednesday, September 16

Catechism begins this Wednesday, September 16 at 6:15PM. All registered children attending the “in person”

Religious Education at Ss. Cyril & Methodius should have received letters in the mail with this year’s calendar, teacher’s assignment, and other information describing some new rules due to COVID.

Grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade and Special Needs will take place in the church building from 6:15PM–7:15PM to allow parents time to pick up their children and proceed to the Activity Center to pick up their older children (grades 4th–8th) for their 7:30PM dismissal.

Parents – Please remember to follow the directions of the Knights of Columbus in the Parking Lot. They are giving of their time to see that all volunteers, students and their families are safe each and every Wednesday Night. These selfless gentlemen have done this for more years than I can count and come with the experience and know-how that we have come to rely on tremendously.

Unfortunately there will be no Benediction on Wednesday Evenings but we hope that it will return in our next school year.

**September’s Calendar:** Class on September 16, 23 and 30

May God Bless You and Yours, Mr. & Mrs. Paul & Carroll Schuller  
(586) 726-6911, ext. 112 or cschuller@saintcyrils.church

### Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (R.C.I.A.)

#### Adult Catholic Catechism Classes Begin Thursday, September 17

Do you know anyone who is interested in becoming Catholic or someone who was never baptized or received their First Holy Communion or Confirmation? If so, our RCIA classes begin this Thursday, September 17. Join a group of passionate Catholics as they teach and explore the treasures and riches of the Roman Catholic Faith.

If you, or someone you know, has never been Baptized, Confirmed, or received First Holy Communion, and would like to; or if you have, but just want to learn more about what the Catholic Church teaches, now is your time to act!

This course will help you learn the Catholic Faith, prepare you to receive the Sacraments, and/or enter into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil on April 3, 2021.

The Ss. Cyril & Methodius RCIA meetings begin this Thursday, in-person, and will be held from 7:00PM – 8:30PM. Maximum safety precautions and cleaning procedures, as outlined by the Archdiocese and issued by the State of Michigan, will be enforced. (Face masks are required.)

If you have any questions, would like more information, or to sign up, please contact: Ron Potempski, (586) 879-3385

### Thursday Nights Holy Masses Resume September 17

Everyone is warmly welcomed to the weekly 7:00PM Holy Mass beginning this week on Thursday, September 17. We will pray in a special way for our country, our beloved Catholic Church and for all priests. Please join us.

Questions, please call: Lorraine Drozdowski, (586) 323-1833

### EDGE Middle School Kick-Off • Thursday, September 17

EDGE Night will begin this Thursday, September 17, from 6:45PM-8:45PM in the church parking lot. Please be mindful that Confessions are taking place in the parking lot until 7:00PM, therefore, do not enter by the Slovak Cross.

Parents, please register new **AND** returning teens at:

<https://tinyurl.com/lifeteenedge>

If you have questions, would like to be put on our mailing list or would like to volunteer, please contact:

Alexandria Lewis, (586) 641-7672 or [lifeteen@saintcyrils.church](mailto:lifeteen@saintcyrils.church)

### Get Ready to VOTE! Registration Drive • September 19/20

#### YOU can change our country’s future!

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” These profound words were said by Edmund Burke, who also stated, “Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do little.” It is our patriotic duty and privilege to vote. If you are 18 years or older, you must be registered in order to vote.

Registrations will be available after all Holy Masses next weekend, September 19 & 20.

You may also register on-line at [SOSMichiganVote](https://SOSMichiganVote.com)

### Life Teen High School Kick-Off • September 21

Life Teen High School Ministry will kick-off on Monday, September 21, from 6:45PM-8:45PM in the church parking lot.

Parents, please register new **AND** returning teens at:

<https://tinyurl.com/lifeteenedge>

If you have questions, would like to be put on our mailing list or would like to volunteer, please contact:

Alexandria Lewis, (586) 641-7672 or [lifeteen@saintcyrils.church](mailto:lifeteen@saintcyrils.church)

### Daily Public Rosary for our Country

#### Together We Pray, United We Stand

There are only 51 days until the Presidential Election. Our country needs prayers so please come as often as you can to support each other in this peaceful prayer event for our country. The daily public Rosary for our Country is prayed daily, outdoors, and will continue until the Presidential Election on Tuesday, November 3.

Prayers take place on weekdays at 5:30PM & weekends at 8:30AM.

Bring a chair and do not park in front of the Slovak Cross in order to keep the area around the cross open for those participating. Please practice social distancing.

*“I pray that they may be [one] in Us,*

*that the world may believe that You sent Me.” –John 17:21*

### Alpha Online Fall 2020 • September 22

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the basics of the Christian faith. Run over 11 weeks, each session looks at a different question that people can have about faith and is designed to create conversation. Alpha is a safe, non-judgmental, friendly, and welcoming space to explore life’s big questions together. Join us for an engaging talk and small group conversation. This version of Alpha is being offered online due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is being sponsored by Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit and will include the involvement of some seminarians as small group discussion animators. Registration is free. To find out more please visit [shms.edu/alpha](https://shms.edu/alpha).

**Drop-off Food Drive & Flag Retirement Drive**  
**NEXT Saturday, September 19 • 9:30AM - 11:30AM**  
**Help stock the shelves at St. Christine's Food Bank**

More and more families are not able to make ends meet and are coming to St. Christine's Community Services food bank for groceries. The food bank currently helps 195 families each week; a 35% increase since last fall. The need for food to feed these families is great. To help stock the food bank, St. Cyril's will be sponsoring a non-perishable food drive at the Activity Center on Saturday, September 19, from 9:30AM to 11:30AM. The foods that are most needed are canned meats or tuna, cereal, salad dressings, and taco or pizza making kits but donations of any canned or packaged foods (no glass jars, please!) will be greatly appreciated. Please bring your donation in a sturdy cardboard box or a bag ready to be transported.

Because of current restrictions, this will be a drop-off food collection. What does that mean? It will be a lot like the drop off for Catechism. You will enter the Activity Center parking lot from 18 Mile Road and drive to the back of the building.

Please have your donations in your trunk (preferably) or back seat. Volunteers will direct you to place your donation in the back of the delivery truck or will do this for you while practicing social distancing. You will then continue around the Activity Center and exit to 18 Mile Road. To make the drop-off run smoothly and quickly,

If you are attending the 9:00AM Holy Mass, please park in the church's main lot.

If you are a parishioner and in need of food, please contact the Parish Office or speak with Fr. Libor or Fr. Juraj after Mass.

**Knights of Columbus FLAG RETIREMENT Drive • NEXT Saturday, September 19**

Also on Saturday, September 19, from 9:30AM to 11:30AM, the Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Blessed Virgin Mary Assembly 1839 will collect unserviceable U.S. Flags. Please enter the Activity Center parking lot from 18 Mile Road and drive to the back of the building and a member of the Knights of Columbus will respectfully collect your old, unserviceable U.S. flags. These flags will be delivered to the proper location to be retired in a dignified and solemn ceremony.



**Mosaic Renderings on Display through September**

Last October, Fr. Kamil Drab, CSSR, master mosaic artist known as the "Michelangelo of Slovakia", visited our church to share his deep knowledge of, and devotion to, the Mosaic artform and to determine how Mosaic artwork could enhance our worship space. Father Drab returned to Slovakia eager to create renderings for our consideration to include this form of sacred artwork in our church.

Fr. Drab's submitted proposals that are now on display in the Fr. Mikus (North) Hall. They will be on display during the month of September and are available to view after all Holy Masses.

The Mosaic artwork would begin in the entryway of the church, above the baptismal font. Representations of the Old Testament would adorn the upper left walls that lead to the sanctuary, while the New Testament would adorn the upper right walls that lead to the sanctuary. The two triangular walls that are positioned on the outside of the crucifix would feature our patrons, Ss. Cyril & Methodius, as well as the two original Ss. Cyril & Methodius churches. Our beautiful Crucifix would remain as-is, with the back marble wall enhanced with gold-leaf detailing to tie all the beautiful Mosaic artwork together.

\*PLEASE wear a face mask and keep 6' social distancing when you are in the Fr. Mikus Hall

This project is on hold at this time. Before making any decisions, your input is encouraged.

Email Fr. Libor: [lmarek@saintcyrils.church](mailto:lmarek@saintcyrils.church)

Fr. Libor will evaluate where we stand with finances in a few months in order to make the most prudent decision.

**BLOOD DONORS NEEDED!**

**Red Cross Blood Drive • September 22 • 1:00 - 6:45PM**

We are in desperate need for donors! As you know, donating blood products is essential to community health and the need for blood products is constant. If you donated whole blood at our Blood Drive in July, you are eligible to donate at our upcoming Blood Drive on Tuesday, September 22. All blood, platelet and plasma donations will be tested for COVID-19 antibodies. Questions: 1-800-RED-CROSS

To donate:

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/donation-time>

For more information, visit: <http://www.redcross.org> or

**Annual Life Chain • October 4**

Every year, people all over the nation gather together on the first Sunday of October at about the same time to peacefully protest against abortion. Ss. Cyril & Methodius will, once again, host the event with the support of Right-to-Life-LIFESPAN. Details will be included in next week's bulletin.

**Missalettes Available**

When the pandemic began in March, the Breaking Bread Missalettes were removed from the pews in order to minimize the potential of spreading germs. The missalettes have been in storage since that time.

If you would like a missalette, you are welcome to take one for your private use. Feel free to bring the missalette to Mass each week, but please remember to take it home with you. The missalettes include the Sunday and Holy Day readings through Thanksgiving Day, November 26.

Missalettes are available after all weekend Holy Masses while they last.

# The Challenge of Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship



## Part I of II: Our Call as Catholic Citizens

This brief document is Part I of a summary of the US bishops' reflection, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, which complements the teaching of bishops in dioceses and states.

*Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* is the teaching document of the Catholic Bishops of the United States on the political responsibility of Catholics. It provides guidance for all who seek to exercise their rights and duties as citizens. As Catholics, we bring the richness of our faith to the public square. We draw from both faith and reason as we seek to affirm the dignity of the human person and the common good of all.

Everyone living in this country is called to participate in public life and contribute to the common good.<sup>1</sup> In *Rejoice and Be Glad* [*Gaudete et exsultate*], Pope Francis writes:

Your identification with Christ and his will involves a commitment to build with him that kingdom of love, justice and universal peace. . . . You cannot grow in holiness without committing yourself, body and soul, to giving your best to this endeavor.<sup>2</sup>

As Catholics, we are part of a community with profound teachings that help us consider challenges in public life, contribute to greater justice and peace for all people, and evaluate policy positions, party platforms, and candidates' promises and actions in light of the Gospel in order to help build a better world.

## Why Does the Church Teach About Issues Affecting Public Policy?

The Church's obligation to participate in shaping the moral character of society is a requirement of our faith, a part of the mission given to us by Jesus Christ. As people of both faith and reason, Catholics are called to bring truth to political life and to practice Christ's commandment to "love one another" (Jn 13:34).

The US Constitution protects the right of individual believers and religious bodies to proclaim and live out their faith without government interference, favoritism, or discrimination. Civil law should recognize and protect the Church's right and responsibility to participate in society without abandoning its moral convictions. Our nation's tradition of pluralism is enhanced, not threatened, when religious groups and people of faith bring their convictions into public life. The Catholic community brings to political dialogue a consistent moral framework and broad experience serving those in need.

## Who in the Church Should Participate in Political Life?

In the Catholic tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. As Catholics, we should be guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to any political party or interest group. In today's environment, Catholics may feel politically disenfranchised, sensing that no party and few candidates fully share our comprehensive commitment to human life and dignity. This should not discourage us. On the contrary, it makes our obligation to act all the more urgent. Catholic lay women and men need to act on the Church's moral principles and

become more involved: running for office, working within political parties, and communicating concerns to elected officials. Even those who cannot vote should raise their voices on matters that affect their lives and the common good. Faithful citizenship is an ongoing responsibility, not just an election year duty.

## How Can Catholic Social Teaching Help Guide Our Participation?

In the words of Pope Francis, "progress in building a people in peace, justice and fraternity depends on four principles related to constant tensions present in every social reality. These derive from the pillars of the Church's social doctrine, which serve as 'primary and fundamental parameters of reference for interpreting and evaluating social phenomena.'"<sup>3</sup> The four principles include the dignity of the human person, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity. Taken together, these principles provide a moral framework for Catholic engagement in advancing what we have called a "consistent ethic of life" (*Living the Gospel of Life*, no. 22).

Rightly understood, this ethic does not treat all issues as morally equivalent; nor does it reduce Catholic teaching to one or two issues. It anchors the Catholic commitment to defend human life and other human rights, from conception until natural death, in the fundamental obligation to respect the dignity of every human being as a child of God.

Catholic voters should use Catholic teaching to examine candidates' positions on issues and should consider candidates' integrity, philosophy, and performance. It is important for all citizens "to see beyond party politics, to analyze campaign rhetoric critically, and to choose their political leaders according to principle, not party affiliation or mere self-interest" (USCCB, *Living the Gospel of Life*, no. 33). The following summary of the four principles highlights several themes of Catholic social teaching for special consideration: these include **human rights and responsibilities, respect for work and the rights of workers, care for God's creation, and the preferential option for the poor and vulnerable.**<sup>4</sup>

## The Dignity of the Human Person

Human life is sacred because every person is created in the image and likeness of God. There is a rich and multifaceted Catholic teaching on human dignity summarized in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. Every human being "*must always be understood in his unrepeatable and inviolable uniqueness* . . . This entails above all the requirement not only of simple respect on the part of others, especially political and social institutions and their leaders with regard to every man and woman on the earth, but even more, this means that the primary commitment of each person towards others, and particularly of these same institutions, must be for the promotion and integral development of the person" (no. 131). The *Compendium* continues, "It is necessary to 'consider every neighbor without exception as another self, taking into account first of all his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity' (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 27).

Every political, economic, social, scientific and cultural program must be inspired by the awareness of the primacy of each human being over society.”<sup>5</sup>

## Subsidiarity

It is impossible to promote the dignity of the person without showing concern for the family, groups, associations, and local realities—in short, for those economic, social, cultural, recreational, professional, and political communities to which people spontaneously give life and which make it possible for them to achieve effective social growth.<sup>6</sup> The family, based on marriage between a man and a woman, is the fundamental unit of society. This sanctuary for the creation and nurturing of children must not be redefined, undermined, or neglected. Supporting families should be a priority for economic and social policies. How our society is organized—in economics and politics, in law and public policy—affects the well-being of individuals and of society. Every person and association has a right and a duty to participate in shaping society to promote the well-being of individuals and the common good.

The principle of subsidiarity reminds us that larger institutions in society should not overwhelm or interfere with smaller or local institutions; yet larger institutions have essential responsibilities when the more local institutions cannot adequately protect human dignity, meet human needs, and advance the common good.<sup>7</sup>

## The Common Good

The common good is comprised of “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.”<sup>8</sup>

Human dignity is respected and the common good is fostered only if **human rights are protected and basic responsibilities are met**. Every human being has a right to life, a right to religious freedom, and a right to have access to those things required for human decency—food and shelter, education and employment, health care and housing. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities—to ourselves, to our families, and to the larger society.

The economy must serve people, not the other way around. An economic system must serve the dignity of the human person and the common good by **respecting the dignity of work and protecting the rights of workers**. Economic justice calls for decent work at fair, living wages, a broad and fair legalization program with a path to citizenship for immigrant workers, and the opportunity for all people to work together for the common good through their work, ownership, enterprise, investment, participation in unions, and other forms of economic activity. Workers also have responsibilities—to provide a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay, to treat employers and coworkers with respect, and to carry out their work in ways that contribute to the common good. Workers, employers, and unions should not only advance their own interests but also work together to advance economic justice and the well-being of all.

We have a duty to **care for God’s creation**, which Pope Francis refers to in *Laudato Si’* as “our common home.”<sup>9</sup> We all are called to be careful stewards of God’s creation and to ensure a safe and hospitable environment for vulnerable human beings now and in the future. Pope Francis, consistent with St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI (World Day of Peace Message, 1990 and 2010), has lifted up pollution, climate change, lack of access to clean water, and the loss of biodiversity as particular challenges. Pope Francis speaks of an “ecological debt” (no. 51) owed by wealthier nations to developing nations. And he calls all of us to an “ecological conversion” (no. 219), by which “the effects of [our] encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in [our] relationship with the world around [us].”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, this concern with “natural ecology” is an indispensable part of the broader “human ecology,” which encompasses not only material but moral and social dimensions as well.

## Solidarity

Solidarity is “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to . . . the good of all and of each individual, because we are *all* really responsible *for all*.” It is found in “a commitment to the good of one’s neighbor with the readiness, in the Gospel sense, to ‘lose oneself’ for the sake of the other instead of exploiting him, and to ‘serve him’ instead of oppressing him for one’s own advantage.”<sup>11</sup>

We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Our Catholic commitment to solidarity requires that we pursue justice, eliminate racism, end human trafficking, protect human rights, seek peace, and avoid the use of force except as a necessary last resort.

In a special way, our solidarity must find expression in the **preferential option for the poor and vulnerable**. A moral test for society is how we treat the weakest among us—the unborn, those dealing with disabilities or terminal illness, the poor, and the marginalized.

## Conclusion

In light of Catholic teaching, the bishops vigorously repeat their call for a renewed politics that focuses on moral principles, the promotion of human life and dignity, and the pursuit of the common good. Political participation in this spirit reflects not only the social teaching of our Church but the best traditions of our nation.

## Notes

- 1 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1913-15.
- 2 *Gaudete et Exsultate*, no. 25.
- 3 *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 221.
- 4 These principles are drawn from a rich tradition more fully described in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* from the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005), no. 160. For more information on these principles, see *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, 2016, nos. 40ff.
- 5 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 132. This summary represents only a few highlights from the fuller treatment of the human person in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. For the fuller treatment, see especially nos. 124-159 where many other important aspects of human dignity are treated.
- 6 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 185.
- 7 *Centesimus Annus*, no. 48; *Dignitatis Humanae*, nos. 4-6.
- 8 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 164.
- 9 *Laudato Si’*, no. 77.
- 10 *Laudato Si’*, no. 217.
- 11 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 193. (See Mt 10:40-42, 20:25; Mk 10:42-45; Lk 22:25-27)

Copyright © 2020, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington DC. All rights reserved.

Quotes from the *Compendium on the Social Doctrine of the Church*, copyright © 2004, Libreria Editrice Vaticana (LEV), Vatican City State. Used with permission. All rights reserved.



Quotes from *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si’*, and *Gaudete et Exsultate* copyright © 2013, 2015, 2018, Libreria Editrice Vaticana (LEV), Vatican City State. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-30137-545-2  
Publication No. 7-545