



DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

Office of the Bishop

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March 28, 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As our state and nation move towards an important series of elections, I write to encourage you to participate as faithful citizens in the electoral process. As Americans, we live in a free and pluralistic nation, with its many voices and points of view. As Catholics, we are called upon to make moral choices ever faithful to the Gospel. The upcoming elections will provide an opportunity to exercise these moral choices, especially for the protection of the unborn and all human life.

Along with my brother Bishops in the United States, I encourage you to participate in shaping the ethical character of our society through the “Faithful Citizenship” initiative. The Diocesan website (www.dioceseofraleigh.org) contains a link to the Faithful Citizenship documents developed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. In the coming weeks and months, leading up to the statewide and national elections, I ask that you watch your parish bulletins for more information which will present the Catholic teachings that can be of great assistance as you prepare for “The Challenge of Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.”

Our Catholic tradition has a long history of Catholic Social Teaching that offers several areas for consideration when making moral and ethical decisions in the private and public arena. The pinnacle of all social teaching of the Church is the respect for all human life, from conception to natural death, especially the protection of the unborn.

It is my hope and prayer that you will take advantage of the opportunity we have in our upcoming elections to reflect on our privilege as American citizens and on our obligation as Catholics. I encourage you to build a world where, with God’s grace, the respect for all human life and the unborn is paramount; where the dignity of all persons will be protected and issues on behalf of peace and justice will be promoted.

May Our Risen Lord Jesus bless you and your family in this sacred season and always.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Raleigh