



Canada's Federal Election and the Catholic Church:

Educate, Reflect, Act

RESPECTFUL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Pope John Paul II, who lived under an authoritarian government for much of his life, said, "Freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought."

Canadians are blessed to live in a free and democratic country that is the envy of the world. We have many challenges, yet our political, social and economic problems pale in comparison to many countries worldwide.

Many Canadians have become complacent when it comes to political engagement. The 2015 federal election saw the highest voter turnout in 22 years with just 68% of eligible citizens casting a ballot. In the 1960s and '70s, elections regularly had greater than 75% voter turnout rates.

MORE ABOUT FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE ON REVERSE

FACTS

- 65% of Members of Parliament say they are dissatisfied with the amount of thoughtful, civil debate in the House of Commons.
- 59% of Canadians think candidates and political parties only want their vote.
- 58% of Canadians admit to believing a false news story was real until they later learned it wasn't.
- 26% of Canadians say they "hate" their political opponents.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION BEFORE YOU VOTE ON OCTOBER 21, 2019:

- How can I personally foster respectful dialogue surrounding the federal election campaign?
- Why is it important for me to vote?

FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Political observers expect the October 2019 federal election to be particularly negative and divisive. There is speculation regarding the possibility of illegal or improper interference to manipulate the democratic process. Given the hostile discussions on social media and the aggressive debate in the House of Commons, such political incivility is unsurprising to many.

During this election and throughout our earthly journey, our faith calls on us to be a light in the darkness. We have a duty to be well informed and to vote. Before we vote, we should reflect on how Catholic social teaching can guide our discernment about pressing policy issues. We should pray for those running for office, recognizing that politics is an important vocation. In the words of the Archbishop of Toronto, Cardinal Thomas Collins, we must always speak “with clarity and with charity.”

To help prepare for the 2019 federal election, the Archdiocese of Toronto has compiled a series of resources that will help you discern your vote.

These are non-partisan documents that we hope you will utilize to reflect on a variety of issues from a Catholic perspective.

You can access these resources at: www.archtoronto.org/election

Want to attend a debate with 1,000 Catholics or learn more about other issues leading up to the October 21, 2019 election? Visit www.archtoronto.org/election for more details.

OUR SOCIAL TEACHING TELLS US...

“It is necessary that all participate, each according to their position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person. [...] As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life”

—*Catechism of the Catholic Church (nos. 1913-1915)*

“Politics is more than a mere mechanism for defining the rules of public life: Its origin and its goal are found in justice, which by its very nature has to do with ethics. The state must inevitably face the question of how justice can be achieved here and now.”

— *Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est (“God is Love”), 2005, #28*

“Indifference is dangerous, whether innocent or not.”

—*Pope Francis*



Archdiocese
of Toronto

www.archtoronto.org

#CatholicVote2019

Content created in partnership with
Catholic Charities (Toronto) and Novalis