

THE CHARITY OF CHRIST COMPELS US!

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish

ERECTED 1963, FIRST IN THE WORLD NAMED AFTER MOTHER SETON

1377 EAST MAIN STREET, SHRUB OAK, NY 10588



CLERGY

Rev. Fr. Robert A. Quarato, Pastor

Rev. Fr. Madurawalage Ranjith (Madu), Parochial Vicar

Rev. Fr. John J. Figueroa, Parochial Vicar

Deacon Michael F. Wilson, Associate

PASTORAL STAFF

Mr. James Scolaro, Parish Manager

Mrs. Donna S. Vallario, Religious Education Coordinator

Ms. Jennifer Lavoie, Director of Sacred Music and Organist

Mr. John Reitter, Parish Trustee

Mrs. Gracy Purekal, Parish Trustee

Mr. James Forbes, Finance Council Chair

Mrs. Janet Angelillo, Parish Council Chair

HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

THE LORD'S DAY

Saturday: **5:30PM**, (Contemporary Choir)

Sunday: **7:00** (no music), **8:00, 9:30** (Family Mass, Sept-June)

11:00AM (Solemn Choir), **12:30PM**

Monday-Friday, **7:00AM, 9:00AM**

Saturday, **9:00AM**

Morning Prayer: Monday-Saturday **8:45AM**

For **Holy Day** schedule, consult bulletin

PARISH CONTACTS

RECTORY OFFICE

(914) 528-3547

FAX: (914) 528-4216

E-mail seton@bestweb.net

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

(914) 528-8553

FAX: (914) 528-1880

E-mail setonre@bestweb.net

SACRED MUSIC OFFICE

(914) 528-3547

FAX: (914) 528-4216

E-mail jlavoie@bestweb.net



Handicapped accessible

OCTOBER 25, 2020

WWW.SETON-PARISH.ORG

ORDINARY SUNDAY 30

PASTORAL STAFF

Parish Secretary/Bulletin Editor, Mary Ellen Modico
Parish Staff Assistant, Teresa McCue-Fleming
Parish Custodians, Joseph Napolitano & Luis Uruchima

Religious Ed. Secretary, Ivana Gomez
Religious Ed. Staff Assistants, Jim Arena & Jane Gentile
Religious Ed. Registrar, Martina Norris

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS

Baptism/Becoming a Catholic

Adults (RCIA): call the rectory for information
Infants: Parent Instructions, 2nd Saturday, 11:00am
Celebrations: 1st, 2nd, 3rd Sun., 1:30; 4th Sat, Noon

Reconciliation (Confession)

Sat. 4-5:30PM; **Thurs.** 9:30AM; **Other times**: upon request.

Marriage

The Sacrament of Matrimony requires specific preparation. Contact a priest **at least 6 months** before the planned ceremony. Archdiocesan marriage instruction is mandatory.

Anointing of the Sick/Holy Communion for the Homebound

Contact a priest for ministry to the sick and aged at home or at a local healthcare facility. Upon request, Holy Communion will be brought to **any Catholic** who is seriously ill or homebound.

Confirmation

Baptized adults who have never received First Communion and/or Confirmation should contact a priest to complete their Christian Initiation through the R.C.I.A. process.

Holy Orders/Religious Vocations

The clergy are happy to discuss the prospect of a vocation to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life.

POPULAR DEVOTIONS

Eucharistic Adoration

Monday-Friday, Church, 12:00-3PM
First Friday, 12:00-6:00PM
First Saturday, 9:30-10:30AM
Divine Mercy Chaplet, Monday-Friday, 3PM

Novenas, following 9:00AM Mass

Monday, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Parish Patroness

Thursday, Miraculous Medal

Recitation of the Rosary, Daily, following 9:00AM Mass, Chapel

YOU CAN HELP SAVE A LIFE!

From September 23 through November 1, you're invited to join other Christians across the US and in 62 other nations for **40 Days for Life** – 40 days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion. Since 2007, over 17,000 lives have been saved, 107 abortion clinics have closed and 206 abortion workers have quit as a result of 40 Days For Life. You're also invited to stand and *peacefully pray* during this 40-day vigil in the public right-of-way outside the Planned Parenthood Center at 175 Tarrytown Road in White Plains (Greenburgh). If you'd like more information, please contact Jackie Engelhart at (914) 261-8947 or visit 40daysforlife.com/white-plains.

SETON MASSES *Livestream*

Don't feel comfortable coming out to church yet?
Join us in worship on your computer or smartphone.

9:00 AM + Monday – Saturday

11:00 AM + Sunday

Just visit our website at <http://www.seton-parish.org/>.

Spread the word!

9:30 AM FAMILY MASS HAS RESUMED

Child friendly liturgy and homily. Families with young children are especially invited to attend.

Lord, Teach Me to Pray

There is a group of women who will be completing the 3rd and final part of Lord, Teach Me To Pray, an Ignatian Prayer Series in December. This program helps each person to know and love Jesus Christ through scripture, prayer and contemplation. LTMTP will be an ongoing series, here at Seton, where Part One is a prerequisite. Women who are interested in seeking a deeper relationship with the Lord can call **Regina Kalinowski** at **914-263-7525** or email her at regina224@aol.com.

Seton Parishioner's New Book!



Seton parishioner and mother of four, **Jennifer Degl**, has a children's book being published on November 10, 2020. ***I Was Small But Now I'm Tall*** is a story about a baby who was born much too early and spent many months in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). This premature baby, like many others, overcame the obstacles that threatened her survival and grew into a strong child. The book is based on Jennifer's experience and her daughter Joy's premature birth at 23 weeks gestation, and her fight to survive. You can learn more about their story at www.jenniferdegl.com, and you can purchase the book on both Amazon and Barnes & Noble websites.

All Saints Day

Since it falls on a Sunday, All Saints Day is **not a holy day of obligation** this year.

Seton's Bereavement Group

Seton's Bereavement Group meets Mondays from **11am-12:30pm** in Annex room B. More info, call Bea Schiavo, 914-245-2742 or Mary Campo, 845-528-0775.

Rosary Altar Society

We meet for our monthly **9:30am Mass** Sunday, **November 1st**. Our Deceased Members Mass is Monday, November 16th at 7pm. There is no meeting in November.

CHAPEL OPEN SUNDAY AT 11:00AM & 12:30PM

We invite families with small children to use the chapel during the 11am and 12:30pm Masses. The Mass is projected into the chapel and Holy Communion is distributed there.

MASS INTENTIONS

	5:30	John Mendicino
Sun	Oct 25	Thirtieth Ordinary Sunday
	7:00	People of Seton Parish
	8:00	Nettie & Theodore Gilston
	9:30	Salvatore Capobianco
	11:00	Jessica Marone & Yolanda Milano
	12:30	John Cronin
Mon	Oct 26	Weekday
	7:00	Diana Mollela
	9:00	Lucy Mazzeo
Tue	Oct 27	Weekday
	7:00	Patrick Costello
	9:00	Anna Rucci & Mary Seig
Wed	Oct 28	Sts. Simon & Jude, Apostles
	7:00	Maria R. Ciano
	9:00	Frank Reale
Thu	Oct 29	Weekday
	7:00	Stella Mosia
	9:00	Anna Rucci
Fri	Oct 30	Weekday
	7:00	Edwin Egan
	9:00	John Mendicino
Sat	Oct 31	Weekday
	9:00	COLLECTIVE:
		• For the Constitution of America
		• Frank Mondello
		• James & Edie Kelleher
		• John Olsen
	5:30	John Mendicino
Sun	Nov 1	ALL SAINTS
	7:00	Thomas Samma Kandula
	8:00	People of Seton Parish
	9:30	Carmela Lustrino
	11:00	Vincent DeLongas
	12:30	Dec'd Mbrs Cook & Lavezzoli Families & Msgr. John J. Foley

WEEKLY MEMORIAL

The **Sacramental Bread and Wine** were donated in memory of the **Deceased Members of the Yorktown Fr. John LaFarge Knights of Columbus.**

PRAY FOR OUR SICK

As is our custom, a person's name will appear for four weeks, after which it will be removed unless we hear from the family.

Joan Albanese, Joan Arena, Madelaine Berrigan, Melitta Braun, Anthony Bucello, James Cancro, Sr., James Cancro, Jr., Robert John Carolan, Julianna Chackmakian, Linda Ciccarello, Ann Ciraco, Joseph Ciraco, Ronald & Charlene Ciraco, Josephine Conklin, Mario DellaValle, Edward DiCaprio, Thelma Doebller, Vincent J. Dolce, Linda Dwyer, Ruth Espinoza, Madison Frost, Concetta Fusco, Marie Gillespie, Malachy Francis Goldrick, Arthur Hastings, Erica Higgins, Nicole Horwitt, James Howard, Ann Marie Imbriale, Vincent Kinane, Wayne Koshofer, Eileen Kostecke, Milan Krupa, Dominic Lewis, Tanya Mann, Lorraine Monastra, Peter Montegari, Siobhan Mooney, Michael Murphy, Joan Fontana Nastasi, Rian O'Halloran, William O'Reilly, Lt. Victor Prato, Diane M. Quinn, Christine Rock, Helen Shubik, Marguerite Thiemann

PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED

**Sal Madaffari, Elizabeth Schiefelbein,
Michael C. Maffei**

Select NOVEMBER Events

Wed, Nov 11	Veteran's Day-Rectory Closed
Sat, Nov 14	Pre-Baptism Class
Tue, Nov 17	Fr. Smith on Racism, 7:00pm
Thu/Fri, Nov 26/27	Thanksgiving-Rectory Closed
2nd Collections: Emergency Maintenance Fund, Catholic Charities Campaign, Missalettes, Christmas Flowers	

WELCOME TO SETON!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our visitors worshipping with us today. We are happy to have you with us. And, we hope that you are inspired by our parish family at prayer, and that all of our visitors will come worship with us again soon. May God Bless You and Keep You!

"FALL BEHIND"

Don't forget to turn your clocks **BACK** an hour before going to bed next Saturday night. **Daylight Savings Time** ends at 2:00 AM Sunday, November 1st.

The Memorial of ALL SOULS

TOMORROW, Monday, November 2nd,

Masses at 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM, 12 Noon & 7:30 PM*

* Please Note that the 7:30PM Mass will be celebrated for those who have died over the past year, since November 2, 2019. Family members of the recently deceased are invited to write a letter to the deceased loved one and bring that letter to the Mass. In the midst of death, so much goes unsaid. Perhaps this will become an opportunity for many to find true inner peace. At the conclusion of the Mass, the letters will be burned in a special fire to be kindled in front of the church. As the smoke rises to heaven, we will abide in the blessed hope that all our beloved dead are with the Lord. If you would like your loved one to be included in this Liturgy, please call the rectory. The 7:30PM Mass will be Livestreamed. Letters may be dropped off at the Parish Office.

Memorial Mass for Those in Rose Hills

On Saturday, Nov. 14th, the 9:00am Mass will be offered for those buried in Rose Hills Cemetery. Rose Hills is within our parish and the parish clergy are called to minister there regularly. All are invited to attend.

HOLY HOUR FOR AMERICA Sunday, November 1st, from 3-4pm This event will be Livestreamed

We invite you to join us in prayer before Election Day. Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy, the Holy Rosary and Benediction. *Before we can stand for our flag, we must bend the knee before the Lord to beg His Mercy for the preservation of our Nation and the protection of individual liberty and freedom.*

Monthly Prayer Intentions of Pope Francis

The Holy Father asks the people of the world to pray with him for the following during November:

Universal prayer intention-Artificial intelligence: We pray that the progress of robotics and artificial intelligence may always serve humankind.

Next Weekend No Second Collection And the winner is . . .

The winner of our October **Booster Club**, whose name was drawn Monday at noon by a parishioner, is **Carl Pollack**. He won **\$300**. Congratulations!

Seton's Men's Ministry

All men are welcome to join us any Saturday morning in Annex A from 7:00 to 8:30am for fellowship, prayer, and to discuss that Sunday's Gospel reading. Please see Fr. Quarato for more information.

Mass Cards, etc.

On **Monday, Nov. 2nd at 9:30am**, the following will be available in the rectory: 1) **Mass Intentions** for May 2021; 2) "Memorial Offerings for the **Bread and Wine**," "**Tabernacle Lamp**" and/or **Chapel "Eternal Flame"** for December 2020.

The Wisdom of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

"America's greatest enemy is not from without, but from within, and that enemy is hate: hatred of races, peoples, classes and religions. If America ever dies, it will be not through conquest but suicide." - Preface to Religion

THE CATHOLIC VOTER

We need to participate for the common good. Sometimes we hear: a good Catholic is not interested in politics. This is not true: good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern.

- Pope Francis, 9/16/13

Some helpful websites:

<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship-part-one>

<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship-part-two>

<https://www.usccb.org/resources/novena-faithful-citizenship>

<https://catholicvote.org/vote2020>

<https://www.americamagazine.org/election2020>

<https://www.priestsforlife.org/elections/>

<https://www.osvnews.com/2020/09/25/how-to-form-your-conscience-before-voting/>

<https://osvnews.com/category/in-focus/>

<https://www.osvnews.com/category/perspectives/>

<https://www.ncregister.com/topic/elections2020>

<https://archny.org/questions-sin-voting/>



A Catholic resource for anyone seeking the tools to accompany our brothers and sisters who experience same-sex attraction. truthandlove.com

RCIA—Class Has Begun!

Are you a Catholic who has not made First Communion and/or Confirmation? Are you interested in becoming a Catholic? RCIA means Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Our adult group meets weekly. Anyone who is considering entering the Catholic Church, or is interested in completing his/her Christian Initiation by receiving First Eucharist and Confirmation is invited to contact Fr. Quarato for information.

Online Giving with WeShare

Thank you for considering online giving for your support of our parish. Online giving is safe, simple, and convenient. It benefits our parish by helping to streamline our administrative process and providing more accurate budgeting. Please set up your online giving by clicking the link under the title, "New Donors" provided on our website, www.seton-parish.org.

MASS AIDS

Please go to our website, <http://www.seton-parish.org>, for the Mass readings, hymns and other devotions. Click on the "Mass Aids" on the menu bars on your phone or the link just above the box where you livestream the Mass.

All Souls Day Envelopes

As November is the month of the commemoration of all the Faithful Departed, All Souls Day envelopes are placed by the Heart of Jesus in the tabernacle throughout the month of November. Three Masses on All Souls Day (and a few Masses the days after) will be for those intentions. If you have not taken the opportunity to write the names of your deceased family members on one of the envelopes available at the church doors, please do so as soon as you can and place the envelope in any collection box or drop it at the Parish Office.

Every voice matters in the public forum; every vote counts. Every act of responsible citizenship is an exercise of significant individual power. We must exercise that power in ways that defend human life. - St. John Paul II, Living the Gospel of Life, n. 34.

Credo Holy Hour for Peace & Unity with CatholicHV Tuesday, October 27 @ 7:30pm at Seton

Join the Credo Young Adult Group and the Catholic Young Adults of the Hudson Valley (CatholicHV) for a Holy Hour for Peace & Unity at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Shrub Oak! Come pray with us, for each other, and for the world during this challenging time. There will be a social with light refreshments afterwards. All young adults ages 18-35 are welcome.

Please RSVP by emailing the Credo Young Adult Group at credoyoungadults@gmail.com by tomorrow, Monday, October 26 so we can confirm attendance. **Masks will be required, and please maintain safe social distancing.**

Homebound/Nursing Home Ministry Handbooks

The 2020-21 edition of the handbook will be available for pick up in the sacristy. Homebound and Nursing Home Ministers, please stop in after Mass to pick up a copy.

Workbooks for Lectors

The 2020-21 edition of the workbook (Year B) will be available for pick up in the sacristy. Sunday Lectors please stop in after Mass to pick up a copy.

A Note about Becoming Sponsors For Baptism and Confirmation

It is a great honor to be asked to be a sponsor for Baptism or Confirmation. The role of a "godparent" is to be an "other parent" in matters of our holy Faith. That is why sponsors must be **practicing Catholics, 16 years of age or older (14 years old in the Archdiocese of New York), having received Catholic Confirmation and currently living a good Christian moral life. If the sponsor is married, that person must be in a valid Catholic Church marriage.** One sponsor is required for Confirmation. It is customary to have two for Baptism, in which case one must be male and the other female. Parents may not be sponsors. A baptized non-Catholic may replace the second Baptism sponsor as a Christian witness. Non-Christians may not be Sponsors. Former Catholics may not be sponsors.

A nominated sponsor is asked to get certification from his/her current parish. This is a declaration by a priest/deacon that the individual is qualified to be a sponsor according to Church Law. To be so certified, the individual must be a **current parishioner of the particular parish where the certification is being sought, and be known to the priest/deacon as being a faithful practicing Catholic, attending Mass there weekly.**

Those away at college or graduate school or in the military should seek certification from their campus ministries or chaplains.

Unfortunately, at times, family members or friends are chosen to be sponsors with good intentions, but are found to be ineligible according to Church Law. Also, more and more, people seem to think that they are still "parishioners" of their childhood parish, where they attended school or received sacraments years ago, while no longer living in the area or attending Mass there regularly. **It is important for all individuals to be active members of their local Catholic faith communities.**

Here, at Seton, Certificates of Sponsorship are given by the pastor to registered members of the parish who are practicing Catholics, and who meet the above criteria. Please see the pastor after Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday to inquire about getting a certificate.

YOUR DONATIONS TO SETON DO MATTER

A COLLECTION BOX FOR SUNDAY DONATIONS & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS IS AT THE ALTAR OF THE CHURCH. YOU CAN ALSO BRING YOUR DONATIONS TO THE PARISH OFFICE OR MAIL THEM IN OR USE OUR ON-LINE GIVING SERVICE. THE LINK IS PROVIDED ON OUR WEBSITE: SETON-PARISH.ORG. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED GENEROSITY!**

Food Pantry Coat Drive Success!

A chill was in the air on Saturday, October 17th, but under a tent, racks of coats and winter apparel were available for folks to take to keep themselves and their families toasty warm this coming winter. Thank you to all Seton's parishioners who donated **more than 100 coats, along with dozens of hats, scarves & gloves.** (Any items received after the distribution date will be donated to an upcoming Midnight Run.)

A CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO RACISM IN OUR MIDST

Father Kareem Smith

Tuesday, November 17th @ 7pm in the Church

(This event will be livestreamed)

As Catholics we need to be attentive to the sin of racism wherever it may be found, especially in our nation, communities, parishes, families and even in our own hearts. Also as Catholics, Church teaching offers us a way to help bring about the healing and reconciliation, justice and peace that is needed now more than ever. Father Smith, by means of personal witness and teaching, will help us to see how we can move forward together. Father Smith is the Parochial Vicar of Annunciation – Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Crestwood and a member of the Archdiocesan Office of Black Ministry. He is a contributor to a current Westchester Magazine piece on racism.

<https://westchestermagazine.com/life-style/local-westchester-leaders-reflect-on-race/>

Visit the Office of Black Ministry's Website:

<https://archny.org/ministries-and-offices/cultural-diversity-apostolate/black-ministry/>

Racism is a Life Issue!

Be In-FORMED

We hope you are enjoying the free parish subscription to www.formed.org which gives you 24/7 access to over 300 quality Catholic online programs, 99+ movies, 101+ audios, & 98+ E-Books. On Wednesday we celebrate the Feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles. Study *Lectio: Evangelization* or Watch: *Lost Gospels or False Gospels*.

DECEASED PARISHIONERS

Parishioners who "passed from this life to the next" during the week of October 24th in previous years: **Rita Simeone, Robert Oakes, William Corsa, Patricia Correa, Rita L Andruk, Anthony Api, Jean Marino, Jean Christoforo, Sarah Murray, Wilma R. Basile, Mary Massimo, Elsie Carroll, Frank Mondello, Mary Heslin, Loretta Hirschmugl, Anthony Pat Viverito, Ronald Jordan, Lucy Mazzeo, Sara Anne Anderson, Pasquale LaRontonda, Marilyn Cuccia, Frank Desalma, Joan McCann, Kenneth Raimondi, Robert E. Conroy, Eric Weber, Jeanne Hickey, Ann M. Walsh, John Delehanty, John Daly, Felix Andruk, Genoveva Melnychuck, Harold Holland, Robert J. Reilly, Helen Dillon, Richard Iaboni, Nicole M. Flora, Patricia Higgins, Louis Violante, Madeline Arceri, Luis Nieves-Rodriguez, Frank Ferguson, Rose King, Rosaleen O'Reilly, Lora Wagner-Saccomanno, Jason R. Daly, Jeanette M. Carolan, Betty Ann McAvoy, Anthony Dichiario, Anna Winters, Thomas P. O'Connor, Maria E. Beck, Salvatore Scancarello, Deborah Weis, Carmela Magaletto, Anthony Perretti, Anna Canale, James Haviland**

BULLETIN SPOTLIGHT

This week, Seton Parish highlights **Dr. Sean M. Rooney, Children & Adult Orthodontics** and **Kathleen Marcus, RN, Senior Assistance** whose advertisements at the rear of our bulletin, along with nearly 100 other local businesses, make possible the printing of this parish bulletin by the John Patrick Publishing Company, 52 weeks a year. **When the need arises, please patronize our advertisers.**



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

You and your family deserve to be safe and loved in your home.

Sometimes bad things happen in good families. Yelling, hitting, shoving,
insults, not sharing income.

If you are experiencing or using these behaviors at home or living in fear,
change is possible. You can be safe and bring peace to your family.

“Come to me, all
you that are weary
and are carrying
heavy burdens, and
I will give you rest.”

— Matthew 11:28

**FOR YOUR
MARRIAGE**

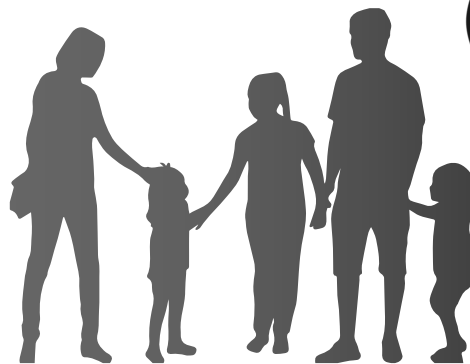
www.foryourmarriage.org/domestic-violence



Local help is available:

**24/7 NATIONAL DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE HOTLINE:**

**1-800-799-SAFE
(7233)**



If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, help is available. Call the 24/7 National Domestic Violence Hotline.



Catholic
Current

BULLETIN

1

The Challenge of Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship

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.¹ 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.²

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.'"³ 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.**⁴

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.”⁵

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.⁶ 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.⁷

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.”⁸

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.”⁹ 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].”¹⁰ 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.”¹¹

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)

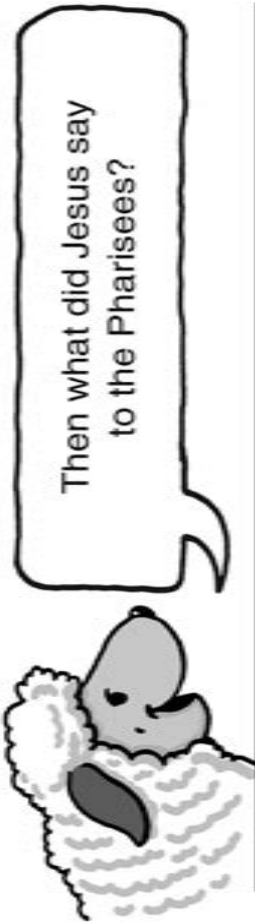
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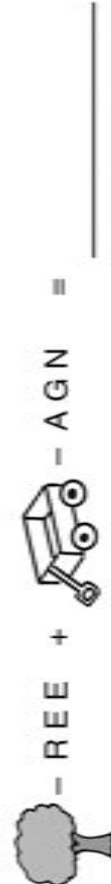
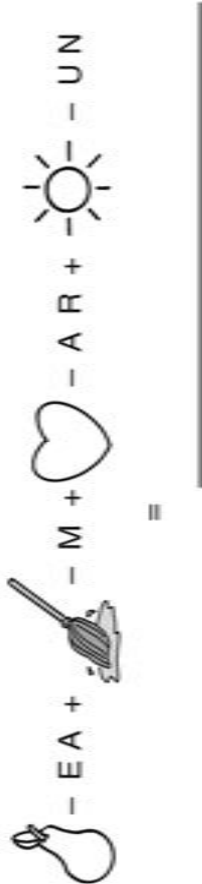
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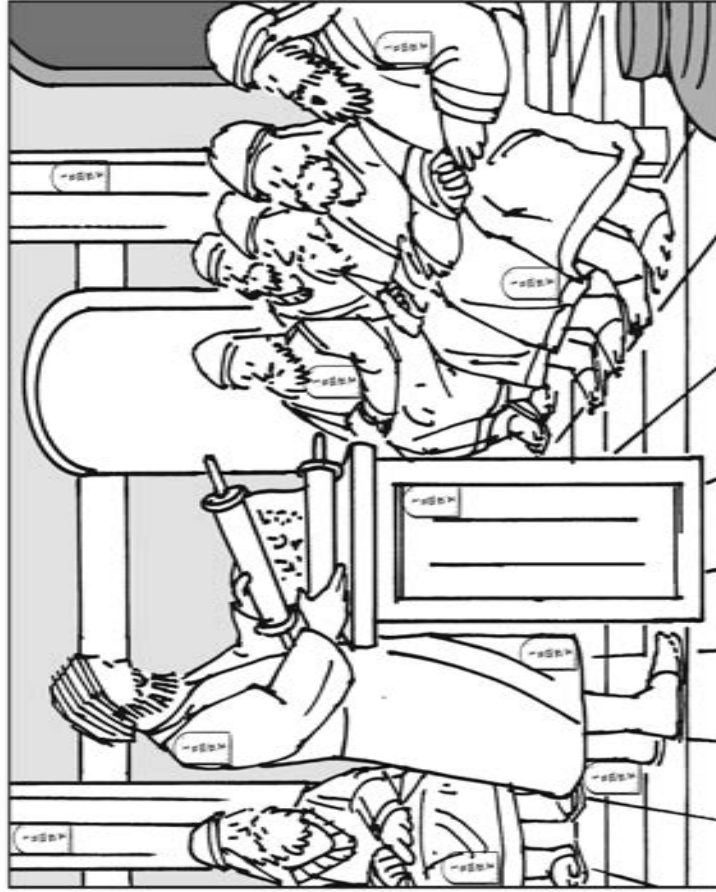


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