



Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship



In the eight weeks leading up to our national elections, Campus Ministry will provide excerpts from Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, 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.

(See the full text of the document in English at <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/upload/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship.pdf> and in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/resources/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship-spanish.pdf>.)



Week 4: September 28-October 2

4 Principles to Guide Our Participation: II. Subsidiarity

II. 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. 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.

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Prepared by The Office of Campus Ministry at Assumption University to help members of the University community form their consciences and prepare to participate in the upcoming national elections. All material is drawn from the "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.