

# PEACE AND JUSTICE



## Article – 16

*The following is an excerpt from: <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship-title>*

### Conclusion

57. Building a world of respect for human life and dignity, where justice and peace prevail, requires more than just political commitment. Individuals, families, businesses, community organizations, and governments all have a role to play. Participation in political life in light of fundamental moral principles is an essential duty for every Catholic and all people of good will. 58. The Church is involved in the political process but is not partisan. The Church cannot champion any candidate or party. Our cause is the defense of human life and dignity and the protection of the weak and vulnerable. 59. The Church is engaged in the political process but should not be used. We welcome dialogue with political leaders and candidates; we seek to engage and persuade public officials. Events and photo ops cannot substitute for serious dialogue. 60. The Church is principled but not ideological. As St. John Paul II wrote in his encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, The Church's social doctrine is not . . . an ideology, but rather the accurate formulation of the results of a careful reflection on the complex realities of human existence, in society and in the international order, in the light of faith and of the Church's tradition. Its main aim is to interpret these realities, determining their conformity with or divergence from the lines of the Gospel teaching on man and his vocation, a vocation which is at once earthly and transcendent; its aim is thus to guide Christian behavior. It therefore belongs to the field, not of ideology, but of theology and particularly of moral theology. (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, no. 41). We cannot compromise basic principles or moral teaching. We are committed to clarity about our moral teaching and to civility. In public life, it is important to practice the virtues of charity and justice that are at the core of our Tradition. We should work with others in a variety of ways to advance our moral principles. 61. In light of these principles and the blessings we share as part of a free and democratic nation, we bishops vigorously repeat our call for a renewed kind of politics to focus more on moral principles than on the latest polls, focus more on the needs of the weak than on benefits for the strong and to focus more on the pursuit of the common good than on the demands of narrow interests. 62. This kind of political participation reflects the social teaching of our Church and the best traditions of our nation.

*Next week we will start reviewing the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops social justice document on racism – Open Wide our Hearts*



open wide our hearts

the enduring call to love *a pastoral letter against racism*

In Christ,  
Deacon Joe Fragale