Catholic Social Teaching, Politics, and the Fullness of Faith

September 10th, 2020

CatholicClimateCovenant.org
Lord God, loving Creator,
You fashioned us from clay,
And breathed life into us.
We are made and loved by you.

The Spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of the Almighty has given me life.

Heavenly God,
Your Spirit fills us with hope
And lights the path to fullness of life.
Hear us!
As we cry out to you, uncertain and afraid.

The Spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of the Almighty has given me life.

In your mercy, Lord,
Grant us the strength to rebuild
When all seems lost.
And the courage to reach out
To those in pain.

The Spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of the Almighty has given me life.
Control Panel >>>>

Your Participation

Open and close your control panel

Submit questions and comments via the Questions panel.

Audio is available only through your computer (no phone audio for attendees with this webcast).

Note: Today’s presentation is being recorded and will be provided within 48 hours.
Catholic Social Teaching, Politics, and the Fullness of Faith

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Bishop of Lexington

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Catholic Social Teaching, Politics, and the Fullness of Faith

Most Rev. John Stowe, OFM Conv.
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A Season of Creation Webinar Series
ON THE COMMON GOOD & OUR COMMON HOME

WEBINAR 1:
CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING, POLITICS, AND THE FULLNESS OF FAITH

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“Schema” of Christian Life


1. God is love (1 John 4:8, 16)
2. God loves us (1 John 4:16)
   - “Willing the good of the other … and acting to make that good real” (M. Himes, *Doing the Truth in Love*, p. 110).
3. We love God (or not)
   - **Faith** as “adequate response to this invitation” (*Catechism* n. 142).
4. We are transformed - **Conversion**
   - “Union with God leads to union with God’s loves, and so we will be inclined to love the neighbor whom God loves” (Vacek, p. 143).
5. We respond in/through/with love - **Morality**
   - **Self, Neighbor, and Creation**
   - “An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world” (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 183).
Catholic Social Teaching

- Magisterial teachings for conscientious moral discernment
- “The principles for reflection, the criteria for judgment and the directives for action” (*Compendium*, n. 7).
- “It cannot be emphasized enough how everything is interconnected” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, n. 138).
  - “[H]ow can we separate, or even set at odds, the protection of the environment and the protection of human life, including the life of the unborn?” (Pope Benedict XVI, 2010 Message to the Diplomatic Corps)
  - “Christians, in particular, realize that their responsibility within creation and their duty towards nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith” (Pope John Paul II, 1990 World Day of Peace Message, n. 15, emphasis added).
- “Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, n. 217, emphases added).
"The conscience is called by this social teaching to recognize and fulfill the obligations of justice and charity in society."

-Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 82

Love in Action

The conscience is called by this social teaching to recognize and fulfill the obligations of justice and charity in society.

 Pope Francis, Address to Pastoral Convention, 6/25/13

Charitable Works
Meet Basic Needs and Aid Individuals

- Volunteer at homeless shelters
- Tutor children
- Assist women who face a crisis pregnancy
- Participate in a community beautification program
- Donate to food pantries and clothing closets
- Sponsor a refugee family
- Raise money for an overseas development project

Love in Action

“As Benedict XVI stresses in his social encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, when love follows what he calls the ‘institutional path’ or the ‘political path’ it is ‘no less excellent and effective than the kind of charity which encounters the neighbor directly’ (n. 7). Social justice is to be understood as the political and systemic expression of love or the translation of neighbor-love into institutional or structural vehicles” (K. Himes & DiLeo, “*Laudato Si’* in the United States: Reflections on Love, Charitable Works, and Social Justice,” *Journal of Moral Theology*, Volume 9, Special Issue 1 (2020): 96).
“Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, n. 231 quoting Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, n. 2).

Politics: Activities that foster cooperation and promote the common good (Cf. K. Himes, *Christianity and the Political Order*, p. 2; *Compendium*, n. 168-170).

Love wills and acts for the good of others (M. Himes, *Doing the Truth in Love*, p. 110).

“Politics matters to Christians, therefore, because it concerns the temporal well-being [good] of God’s children” whom we are called to love (K. Himes, *Christianity . . .* p. 4).

“As Catholics, we bring the richness of our faith to the public square . . . In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation” (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, n. 1, 13).

“A good Catholic meddles in politics” (Pope Francis, homily, Sept. 16, 2013).
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Take the 2020 Feast of St. Francis Pledge here: https://catholicclimatecovenant.salsalabs.org/FOSFPledge2020

I Pledge to Vote to Protect Life and Promote the Common Good

During these challenging times, we are called to “bring our faith and our consistent moral framework to important work in our communities, nation, and world”. Just as St. Francis of Assisi demonstrated throughout his life, we too must put our love into action.

"I pledge to vote with love in action in mind so as to protect life, respect human dignity, and promote the common good, including God’s gift of creation."
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Questions?
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For more information: www.CatholicClimateCovenant.org

Send questions to: info@CatholicClimateCovenant.org