

## Guidelines for the Use of Parish and Diocesan Facilities

Church property is private and Church authority has both the need and the right to regulate its use.

- ◆ Every pastor or diocesan administrator has an obligation to ensure that parish or diocesan facilities are used in accord with diocesan policies.
- ◆ No individual, group, or organization may use parish or diocesan facilities for purposes which contradict in any way the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church.
- ◆ Parish or diocesan facilities can be used only by those who respect the law.
- ◆ No parish or diocesan facility can be used for partisan political activity that either supports or opposes any candidate for public office.
- ◆ A public official or figure may be invited to speak at a parish facility or diocesan forum as an expert or consultant on a particular issue in the interest of the common good, but not for political purposes.
- ◆ If a person's conduct, voting record or public comments are contrary to the teachings of the Church, they should not be given any church award or honor.

## The Church and the Political Order

*“The Church’s obligation to participate in shaping the moral character of society is a requirement of our faith. It is a basic part of the mission we have received from Jesus Christ, who offers a vision of life revealed to us in Sacred Scripture and Tradition. To echo the teaching of the Second Vatican Council: Christ, the Word made flesh, in showing us the Father’s love, also shows us what it truly means to be human.*

*Christ’s love for us lets us see our human dignity in full clarity and compels us to love our neighbors as he has loved us. Christ, the Teacher, shows us what is true and good, that is, what is in accord with our human nature as free, intelligent beings created in God’s image and likeness and endowed by the Creator with dignity and rights.”*

*Forming Consciences For Faithful Citizenship*  
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

## Political Action Guidelines:

**Political campaign activity guidelines for parishes and schools**



**Diocese of Pittsburgh**

## Political Responsibility

*Our nation's tradition of pluralism is enhanced, not threatened, when religious groups and people of faith bring their convictions and concerns into public life. Indeed, our Church's teaching is in accord with the foundational values that have shaped our nation's history: "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."*

*The Church equips its members to address political and social questions by helping them to develop a well-formed conscience. Catholics have a serious and lifelong obligation to form their consciences in accord with human reason and the teaching of the Church.*

*Forming Consciences For Faithful Citizenship*

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

## THE CHURCH MAY ...

- ◆ Address the moral and human dimension of all people.
- ◆ Share Church teachings on human life, human dignity, marriage, religious liberty, the common good, justice and peace.
- ◆ Apply Catholic values to legislation and public issues.
- ◆ Conduct nonpartisan voter registration drives on church property.
- ◆ Encourage citizens to exercise their right to vote.
- ◆ Permit church halls or schools to be used as polling places.

If you have questions regarding these guidelines, please contact the Diocese of Pittsburgh at 412-456-3000

## THE CHURCH MAY NOT ...

- ◆ Endorse or oppose particular candidates for public office, either directly or indirectly.
- ◆ Distribute, or to allow groups or individuals to distribute, partisan campaign literature under church auspices or on church property.
- ◆ Place on church property political advertisements or statements in bulletins, newsletters or other publications.
- ◆ Arrange for individuals or groups to work for a particular candidate for public office.
- ◆ Invite only selected candidates to address church-sponsored groups.
- ◆ Allow church equipment or property to be used on behalf of or in opposition to a particular candidate. For example, political signage on church property is prohibited.
- ◆ Conduct voter registrations slanted toward one political party or candidate.
- ◆ Distribute a candidate survey or voter guide that evidences a bias toward certain issues or candidates.