



## WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

**July 9, 2012**  
**For Immediate Release**

### **CATHOLIC CONFERENCE ISSUES LETTER, MATERIALS URGING FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP**

As in past election years, the Wisconsin Catholic Conference has prepared a series of educational resources to help voters meet their duties as faithful citizens. These resources are based on the U.S. bishops' 2007 statement, updated for 2012, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States*.

The materials include a letter signed by all five diocesan bishops in Wisconsin and a four-week series of bulletin inserts.

In their letter, the bishops cite Pope Benedict's reminder that the Church is not a political power or party, but a moral power.

"This moral power comes to us through Christ and the lived experience of the faithful over the centuries," they write. "In the face of the many difficulties confronting our nation and our world today, we invite Catholics to steep themselves in this rich moral tradition by studying the Church's social teaching."

The bishops also exhort Catholics and others to embrace civility in political debates:

"Please remember that we uphold our Catholic values not only by what we say, but how we say it. Thus we urge all faithful citizens to model civility."

"Disagreements will always exist, but a measure of our character is how we pursue justice and peace in spite of our differences. For the good of our nation and our Church, let us recommit ourselves to studying the Church's teaching and applying it in a truthful, responsible, and civil manner," they urge.

The series of bulletin inserts opens with an overview on forming consciences. The remaining three inserts cover six issues that the U.S. bishops identify as particularly pressing in 2012:

- Life & Dignity of the Human Person / Peace & Non-Violence
- Religious Liberty / Immigration Reform
- Marriage & Family / Economic Justice

The WCC also publishes *Guidelines for Church Involvement in Electoral Politics*, to encourage lay participation and to clarify what activities and efforts are appropriate for Church officials and agencies during a political campaign.

Copies of all these voter education materials will be available on the WCC website at [www.wisconsinatholic.org](http://www.wisconsinatholic.org).