# Heart • to • Heart

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*The website www.electionguide.org indicates that for many countries around the world, fall is "election season." Here in the United States, we are preparing for our November 3 "mid-term elections," the general elections that are held near the midpoint of a president's four-year term of office. These are significant elections because they determine which political party will hold the majority in both the United States Senate and the United States House of Representatives for the remainder of a president's term. As these important mid-term elections approach, Heart to Heart shares a variety of resources to help voters prepare.*

The Ignatian Solidarity Network reminds us that

## Voting is an act of love.

**"Love ought to show itself in deeds more than in words."**

These powerful words from St. Ignatius of Loyola remind us that casting a ballot can be an act of love—a way to live out the greatest commandments, to love and serve God and to love our neighbor.

This fall, exercise the right and responsibility to vote for candidates and issues that support the common good and concern for the most vulnerable people in our society.

Go to the website, https://ignatiansolidarity.net/voting-is-an-act-of-love/ to register for their program and to sign the Voting Is An Act of Love Pledge

The **United States Catholic Bishops** have issued a reflection titled
**"The Call to Put Faith Before Politics"**
as a companion to their **Faithful Citizenship** materials.
It is available at
https://www.usccb.org/resources/Faith%20Before%20Politics%20Handout.pdf.

The **Franciscan Action Network**

continues to recruit people of faith to serve as poll chaplains and poll workers for the upcoming midterm elections. They are also offering special pre-election Nonviolent Communication and De-escalation Training on Oct. 20, 2026, 7:00pm USA Eastern Time.

This training by FAN Just Peace Fellow Eli McCarthy is open to anyone wanting to learn how to be a peaceful presence during the upcoming elections. For more information, check out their newsletter:

https://franciscanactionnetwork.salsalabs.org/09162025

**Pre-Election Zoom Prayer Vigil**
**Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 6 p.m. USA Central Time**
**Offered by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet**

This is an opportunity for us to pause, reflect and lift our hearts in prayer for a fair, just and peaceful election process.
All are welcome. No RSVP is required.

Zoom Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89490964300?pwd=ly4fpyM5ypkC5HDnCCHnYbraCRhvqE.1

Meeting ID: 894 9096 4300
Passcode: 462008

An Excerpt from "Why Midterm Elections Matter"

(Ignatian Solidarity Network, www.educationforjustice.org. Used with permission.)

**Faithful Citizenship Is More Than Voting:** Catholic Social Teaching understands political participation as an important expression of love and of neighbor. Casting a ballot matters. Faithful citizenship begins before Election Day and continues long afterward. The ongoing work includes conscience formation, public dialogue, advocacy, service, and accountability.

**Forming Conscience:** A well-formed conscience is not simply a personal feeling or a preference shaped by party loyalty. It seeks truth, listens to Scripture and the Church's moral tradition, considers reliable evidence, and examines the impact of public choices on human life and dignity. Conscience formation also requires humility: a willingness to question assumptions, recognize blind spots, and learn from people whose experiences differ from our own.

**Advocacy and Community Engagement**: Political participation includes speaking with public officials, attending community meetings, supporting nonpartisan voter education, protecting voting rights, joining organizations that work for justice and peace, and advocating for people whose voices are often ignored. Community service is indispensable, but it does not remove the need to address laws, institutions, and public policies that shape people's lives.

**"I appeal for a renewed appreciation of politics as 'a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, inasmuch as it seeks the common good.'" — Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, §180**

**Public Dialogue**: Faithful citizenship calls for respectful and truthful public dialogue. Catholics should resist language that dehumanizes opponents, scapegoats vulnerable communities, or treats contempt as a sign of conviction. Listening does not require abandoning moral principles. It means recognizing the dignity of those with whom we disagree and seeking enough common ground to pursue the good of the whole community.

**Accountability After Election Day**: Voting helps shape who exercises public authority; it does not end a citizen's responsibility. Elected officials should be evaluated by their decisions, use of power, truthfulness, treatment of vulnerable people, and willingness to serve the whole community. Faithful citizenship requires continued attention, advocacy, and accountability throughout an official's term.

**"All citizens... should be mindful of the right and also the duty to use their free vote to further the common good."**
**— Second Vatican Council, Gaudium et Spes, §75**

# Prayer for Elections

Jane Deren, Ph.D.

We pray for our nation in the coming weeks,
That we move beyond our fears and concerns
To discern what will serve the common good
For all members of our society.

We pray that we may respond to the call of solidarity
Rather than the call to separate interests.
May we be more concerned with successful
Community than with individual success.

We pray that we consider ways
Through difficult economic problems
That are compassionate and just
For all who struggle for their daily bread.

We pray that we dwell deeply on the call
To serve those in poverty
And recognize that all humans
Have the right to a life with dignity
And with the basic services to promote human flourishing.

We pray that we take seriously
The call to be peacemakers,
Despite the complexities
In our local, national, and global conflicts.

We pray that we honor
Our responsibilities as citizens
Without resorting to the polarization
That limits our listening.

Guide us in the coming weeks
In our process of discernment
So we serve you
Through our choices and
Our concern for the common good.
Amen.

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