

Catholic Education for Citizenship in the United States: A Blend of Background and Foreground

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The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued a document in 2007 entitled, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship." It was revised in 2011 and will be revised again in 2015. The document was produced and is regularly revised in preparation for Presidential elections but is intended to apply to all elections, federal, state, and local. It provides the basics of Catholic Social Teaching and identifies the official Catholic position on those issues that the bishops think will be the decisive issues in that particular election cycle. Religion teachers in Catholic schools and parishes are expected to teach this document, to children and adults. Once these official positions are articulated on the issues, Catholic voters are expected to select candidates who support those positions. The 2012 "Faithful Citizenship" from the USCCB will be analyzed from the perspective of what counts as good citizenship in the United States, the document's educational efficacy, and the Catholic voting record in the 2012 election.