

# MANNA *in the wilderness*

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The Newsletter of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker

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## A Better Kind of Politics: Civilize It

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops offers 5 Tips from Pope Francis for “a Better Kind of Politics” from *CivilizeIt.org*

In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis calls for “a better kind of politics, one truly at the service of the common good” (no. 154). Essential to a better kind of politics is the ability to foster a social love among people through dialogue across perspectives, inspiring “new ways of approaching the problems of today’s world, of profoundly renewing structures, social organizations and legal systems from within” (no. 183). What is “a better kind of politics”? It means working across differences to listen to one another and connect around shared values, resulting in creative solutions for the common good.

Here are 5 “musts” from Pope Francis that are essential for a “better kind of politics” in both our Church and society.

**We are a human family.** We must recover “the sense of belonging to a single human family.” After all, “we are all in the same boat” (no. 30). This is in stark contrast to the tendency, which has become commonplace, to disengage from difficult conversations and see only our own interests and perspectives. Pope Francis challenges us: “Isolation and withdrawal into one’s own interests are never the way to restore hope and bring about renewal” (no. 30). Instead of “the inclination to be concerned only with myself, my group, my own petty interests” (no. 166) we have to commit to overcoming “every individualistic mindset” and instead “seek the good of all people” including those we may see as different from us (no. 182).

**We must commit to approaching others with love.** Even those with whom we disagree are children of God. Sadly, such an approach has become counter cultural. We have become used to efforts aimed more to “discredit and insult opponents from the outset than to open a respectful dialogue aimed at achieving agreement on a deeper level” (no. 201). This is a situation in which we must be prophetic, modeling by example a respectful approach that honors others as made in God’s image. This involves stepping outside ourselves, listening with empathy, and seeking to truly understand



Volunteers Greg Walker (left) and Nathan Slife (right) have both taken on cooking 40 gallons of food at 5 a.m. Greg is cooking macaroni and cheese on Thursday morning and Nathan is cooking chili mac on Saturday.

another person’s experience.

**We must identify common values based on truth.** Social love, Pope Francis says, has to be “accompanied by a commitment to the truth” (no. 184) informed by both faith and reason (no. 185). An essential starting place for dialogue is to identify common values rooted in truth and justice, such as the dignity of the human person, or a commitment to fundamental human rights and integral human development. Identifying these common convictions can unite us despite our differences and lead to creative thinking and new solutions.

**We must learn how to unmask the various ways that the truth is manipulated.** “We must learn how to unmask the various ways that the truth is manipulated, distorted and concealed in public and private discourse” (no. 208), and to unmask media sources that are actually “powerful special interests that seek to tilt public opinion unfairly in their favor” (no. 201). An important starting point in preparing our hearts for dialogue is to consider from what sources I get my information. Are these sources reputable and long standing? Are they neutral sources or connected with a particular political party or bias? Is it possible that I or others are being manipulated by persons or groups who have their own interests in mind? How can I check claims that I hear

against multiple sources to ensure their accuracy before I share that information with others?

**We must get comfortable with being a polyhedron.** Pope Francis uses the image of the polyhedron (a three-dimensional shape that has many faces) to “represent a society where differences coexist, complementing, enriching and reciprocally illuminating one another, even amid disagreements and reservations” (no. 215). “Authentic social dialogue,” he writes, “involves the ability to respect the other’s point of view and to admit that it may include legitimate convictions and  
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### Donation Information:

**Checks:** Please make checks payable and send to:

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500 W. Van Buren Ave.

Las Vegas, NV 89106-3039

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**Venmo:** @LasVegasCatholicWorker

# Equally Sacred Priorities for Voters

by Pope Francis

from *Gaudette et Exsultate*, March 2018

**101.** . . . Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development. **Equally sacred**, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable, infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection (emphasis added). We

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concerns,” that others “have a contribution to make,” and that we can both “be frank and open about our beliefs, while continuing to discuss, to seek points of contact, and above all, to work and struggle together” (no. 203). In his book, *Let Us Dream*, Pope Francis writes that polarization results when we erroneously perceive disagreement as contradiction instead of contraposition. With the former, we create separate “camps” where there is one winner and one loser. With the latter, differences exist but they are capable of interacting in a “fruitful, creative tension” (p. 79). In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis writes that we must seek to identify “shared goals that transcend their differences and can thus engage in a common endeavor” (no. 157). We must be willing to dialogue with open hearts and get comfortable with creative tension as we hold simultaneous points of view that don’t fit neatly together but which can yield solutions focused on the common good (no. 190).

**Building a better kind of politics through social charity will not be a quick, nor easy process.** It won't be glamorous. Pope Francis writes, “Unlike disagreement and conflict, persistent and courageous dialogue does not make headlines, but quietly helps the world to live much better than we imagine” (no. 198). But if we approach our engagement with these guidelines in mind, and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can arrive together at “a new kind of politics” that produces much fruit to help achieve a common good where all can thrive. How can we respond to this challenging invitation? One action that every Catholic can take is to visit *CivilizeIt.org* to take a pledge based on Pope Francis’ invitation in *Fratelli Tutti*. This webpage also includes numerous resources, including prayers, an examination of conscience, an

cannot uphold an ideal of holiness that would ignore injustice in a world where some revel, spend with abandon and live only for the latest consumer goods, even as others look on from afar, living their entire lives in abject poverty.

**102.** We often hear it said . . . [that] the situation of migrants . . . is a lesser issue. Some Catholics consider it a secondary issue compared to the “grave” bioethical questions. That a politician looking for votes might say such a thing is understandable, but not a Christian, for whom the only proper attitude is to stand in the shoes of those brothers and sisters of ours who risk their lives to offer a future to their children.

individual/communal reflection guide, action steps, and much more. Visit *CivilizeIt.org* today to get involved!

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**Catholic Worker Artwork**  
Our friend Sarah Fuller is offering a bountiful assortment of linocut art for sale on T-Shirts, stickers, posters, cards and more.

Online at:

[redbubble.com/people/sarahfullerart/shop](https://www.redbubble.com/people/sarahfullerart/shop)



Julia Occhiogrosso poses in her “forest” of sunflowers that attract pollinators and enhance the beauty of the Catholic Worker house and surrounding neighborhood.

**We will be Closed**  
**Sept. 14 and**  
**Nov. 27-30**



*we are one family under God*

View resources and take action at:

[JusticeforImmigrants.org](https://www.JusticeforImmigrants.org)

**PLEASE JOIN US**

Volunteer Scheduling:

(702) 647-0728

or [mail@lvcw.org](mailto:mail@lvcw.org)

**Thurs.-Sat., 6:00 a.m.**

Morning prayer at Catholic Worker

**Thurs.-Sat., 6:15 a.m.** Over 300 "To-go" hot meals served to the poor and homeless (6:15 a.m.: meal assembly, 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.: meal distribution)

**Friday, 8-10 a.m.:** Clean the World

Foundation shower trailer in our empty lot, up to 40 showers given. We provide clean clothing and hygiene supplies, Touro University students offer a monthly medical clinic.

**Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.:**

50 lunches taken to the homeless

**Second Sat. of the month:**

Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast for the homeless.

**We are a Participating Member of:**  
Nevadans for the Common Good

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