

Civilize It

As Catholics, we have a long tradition of engagement in the political process as a means of putting our faith into action. We are called to bring the best of ourselves and our faith to the public square – and yet today, many shy away from such involvement because our national and local conversations are filled with vitriol and harsh language, often directed at people themselves. Join the Civilize It campaign by pledging to promote:

- Civility to recognize the human dignity of those with whom we disagree;
- Clarity to stand up for our convictions and speak out when we witness language that disparages others' dignity;
- Compassion to encounter others in a way that honors their dignity.

Take the pledge at CivilizeIt.org.

A call for civil dialogue

How do we treat our neighbors, particularly during debates on our election process? The following are some tips to remain civil, clear and compassionate in accord with the U.S. bishops' initiative Civilize It.

Tips for Engaging in Civil Dialogue:

1. Listen first and seek to understand the whole picture.
2. Ask questions for clarification.
3. Use 'I' statements; pay attention to body language.
4. Listen to what feelings are present and pay attention to how you respond.
5. Summarize what you've heard and ask for feedback.

Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace: A Prayer for Civility

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where uncivil words prevail, show me how to model love.

Help me remember the God-given dignity of all
and invite others to do the same.

Show me how to build bridges and not walls
and see first what unites us rather than how we diverge.

Let me seek to understand before asking to be understood.

Give me a listening heart filled with empathy and compassion.

May I be clear in sharing my own position
and respectful and civil in describing those of others.

Let me never tolerate hateful ideas.

May I invite all to charity and love.

Lord, help me to imitate your compassion and mercy.

Make me an instrument of your peace. Amen.

Inspired by *Nine Rules for Civility from the Catholic Tradition*, Bishop Zubik