

WHAT WE HOLD MOST DEAR

Elections are a unique educational opportunity for all of us. We do not expect salvation from politics or politicians. Nevertheless, politics plays a critical role in our lives.

Father Giussani taught us that when we face the real problems and challenges of life, the ambiguity at the roots of our actions rise to the surface and we affirm what it is we hold most dear. Thus, in the exercise of voting we will see “whether faith is really in the foreground, whether faith truly comes first, whether we really expect *everything* from the fact of Christ or whether we expect what we *decide* to expect from the fact of Christ.”

Two criteria will guide us in deciding where to place our vote in the Canadian elections:

First: Religious Freedom. A political power that respects the freedom of the Church and its free expression in the public square, and acknowledges its valuable contribution to society will also acknowledge the freedom of any human association. A position that respects freedom of the Church will also respect the freedom of all.

Second: The Common Good. Political power, if conceived as service to the people, will defend any experience that promotes the increment of the common good. Such a power will uphold the principle of subsidiarity, that is, the partnership between the public and private sectors is facilitated by a robust non-profit, charitable and voluntary sector, and will promote solidarity among all Canadians.

For these reasons, we will support a political vision that:

- upholds this freedom and this good
- defends “human life and dignity at all stages, from conception to death” (Federal Election 2008 Guide Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops)
- defends the family
- defends the freedom to fulfill works which express true human desire
- does not substitute the state for society but rather encourages society to seek realistic solutions for the common good

Such a political position will also advance realistic social and economic programs motivated by a concern for workers, entrepreneurs, natives, immigrants and all Canadians. It will also demonstrate a real concern for environmental issues, keeping in mind Pope Benedict XVI’s reminder that “Respecting the environment does not mean considering material or animal nature more important than man. Rather, it means not selfishly considering nature to be at the complete disposal of our own interests.”

These criteria will guide our electoral choice in the October elections.
