CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING
Based on the United States Council of Catholic Bishops “Faithful Citizenship” document

First & Last Name: ____________________________
Class: ______  Today’s date: _____________________
Saint of the Day: ____________________________ (“Pray for me!”)

Introduction
1. We live in a good nation, but there are still A LOT of serious challenges for Catholics
2. Americans typically “believe” in high values, but we don’t always live them out (we’re a very hypocritical nation)

What we say we believe VS. How we actually live

Who in the Church Should Participate in Political Life?
1. EVERYONE is responsible for being politically active
2. American politics is oftentimes messy and agenda driven. Catholics need to rise above this and act with a moral focus.
3. Jesus is not a Democrat OR a Republican

What does the Church say about Catholic Social Teaching in the Public Square?
1. Not all issues are equal (see below)
2. Catholics are called to build a “Culture of Life” (JP2), not a “Culture of Death”
3. Catholics need to examine political candidate’s positions in light of Catholic Social Teaching before they vote

CST #1 - Sanctity of Life and Dignity of the Human Person
1. The right to life is the foundation of all other rights
2. Catholics should fight against all “life issues”, such as:
   - Abortion
   - Euthanasia
   - Human Cloning
   - Embryonic Stem-Cell Research
   - Capital Punishment
   - Unjust War
   - Poverty
   - Etc.
3. ALL people are children of God (“from conception to natural death” or “from womb to tomb”)

CST #2 - Call to Family, Community, and Participation
1. Family is the fundamental building block of society
2. Marriage is naturally designed to be between 1 man and 1 woman and should be protected against any redefinitions (i.e. same-sex marriage, polygamy, etc.)
3. Principal of Subsidiarity = issues should be taken care of at the local level first

EXAMPLE: Family... Neighborhood/ School/Church... City... State... Country
# Catholic Social Teachings

## CST #3 - Rights and Responsibilities
1. All basic human rights need to be protected:
   - Life, food/shelter/clothing, health care, education, employment, freedom of religion, etc.
2. Freedom of religion and freedom of conscience need to be constantly defended because they are constantly under attack.

## CST #4 - Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
1. You can tell how healthy a society is by how it treats its weakest members.
2. We will be judged by how we loved others (see Matthew 25:31-46).
3. The “least among us” include:
   - The unborn, disabled, elderly, sick, oppressed.

## CST #5 - Dignity of Work and the Right of Workers
1. Work should be more than just something that pays you. It should contribute to the common good of society.
2. Workers should receive just wages and benefits:
   - Enough money to pay for food, clothing, shelter, and health insurance.

## CST #6 - Solidarity
1. We are ONE big family. Everyone is either a brother or sister to you.
2. Jesus says, “Love your neighbors”, which includes:
   - Starving children in Africa
   - Mexican immigrants in the U.S.
   - Innocent people in war-torn countries
3. Famous quote: “If you want peace, work for justice.” - Pope Paul VI (1972)

## CST #7 - Care for God’s Creation
1. Creation comes from the Creator, so we should respect it and care for it.
2. How we treat the earth today will affect all future generations of people.

## Conclusion
1. Catholic Social Teachings aren’t all right-wing/conservative/Republican OR left-wing/liberal/Democrat. Neither political viewpoint completely matches a truly Catholic one.
2. We have to speak up WHEREver, WHENever, and HOWever we can!
3. What is popular always changes. Catholic teaching does not.