

# SCCs CAN ENABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC-POLITICAL ACTION

## Introduction

In democratic countries the citizens are called exercise their electoral responsibility with spiritual wisdom and with common good in mind. It is a sin to participate in corrupt practices which presents God's Kingdom plan made known to us through Jesus. God desires that all people live in harmony and enjoy the earthly goods for the benefit of all.

Today let us reflect together on God's will for us in nation building and how God expects us to participate in that plan in a responsible manner.

## A. PICTURE

*Look at the picture below and answer the questions given below:*



### Questions:

1. *What do you see in this picture?*
2. *Who or What is symbolized by the big hand?*
3. *What is happening to the people?*
4. *What has this picture to do with the political situation in our country?*

## B. SCRIPTURE STUDY

*Read the Scripture texts given below and answer the question*

- i. Lk: 4:18-19
- ii. Is:1:15-17

### Question:

*1. What are the texts saying to our political leaders?*

**C. TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH:** (CBCI Meeting in Palai, Feb 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

The bishops of India urge us to exercise our right to vote prudently and judicially. They give us the following points for our reflection in deciding upon candidates for parliamentary and assembly elections.

- i. Candidates must be those who uphold the secular character of our nation and promote communal harmony and inter-religious dialogue and understanding.
- ii. Candidates must be those who care for the minorities and weaker sections of the society, protects their rights and works for their uplift.
- iii. Candidates must safeguard the rights of tribals over land, water and forest; and grant equal rights to dalit Christians, equal to those given to other dalits.
- iv. They must work for an economy that seeks in particular to help the poor and the under-privileged, protecting their dignity and enabling them to take their rightful place in nation building.
- v. They must work to improve the climate and conditions in our country, ensuring a totally safe environment for all people, particularly women and children.

**Question:** (discuss with your neighbour)

*1. In the above texts, find out the main concerns of our Church leaders regarding political discernment?*

**2. Summary:**

It is true that some political and industrial leaders are greedy and selfish and they use their influence to political leadership to give decisions favouring them. But the citizens have to be vigilant and cautious not to vote for people to support such trends in our country and support honest and sincere candidates. We saw above what our bishops tell us about our political responsibility.

It is not enough that we just vote for a good candidate. We have to awaken all those around us about how people are taken for granted and others are misguided by those with selfish interests. We should not fall into their traps or join hands with them for little favours they may do to us at the cost of the development of our beautiful country.

We should educate ourselves about the law of the land and how funds which come for the common good are used or misused. With pachayat raj a lot of decisions and funds come to the panchayat and we should find out which all funds are come for what purpose and how decisions are being made.

SCCs can play an important role in animating people in the neighbourhood about our political rights and responsibility.

There are many people in our government departments who are good and interested in the public development. But they need to be supported by us so that they can do their job in the right spirit and way. Let us try to find out such people and support them.

Let us get involved in creating good civic atmosphere in local politics and government. It is both our right and awesome responsibility. When we do not take up our responsibility, the greedy and selfish people take away all the funds come for common good and allow them to do it.

## **D. STEP FORWARD:**

### **Questions:**

1. *Suggest concrete ways in which SCCs can support political candidates who stand for the common good.*
2. *Suggest ways your SCC can get involved in conscientizing people about panchayatraj and local development.*

## **Supplement**

Ways in which SCCs can get involved in socio-economic-political causes:

- **PRAY**, as a community and individually, for the affected people, and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit on the right course of action.
- **INVITE** knowledgeable people to speak to people in our neighbourhood about our rights and how we can ensure that funds allotted to local development is properly utilized and what is our role in this.
- **COLLABORATE** with and support any group and organization that has taken up the fight for justice.
- **SENSITISE** the members of the SCC (and even people of other faiths in our neighbourhoods) to the evils, ill-effects, damage, deprivation, pain and suffering caused by unjust structures and discriminatory policies, unfair laws, abuse of power and position and use of force, through awareness programmes, talks, discussions, pamphlets, etc.
- **EXPRESS** and **AFFIRM** our solidarity with the affected people by way of signature campaigns, representations, assistance and participation in legitimate, non-violent forms of protest and agitation.

- **REFLECT** and pray about ways to support political candidates who will do justice for all and stand for the common good.