

## Judge Not Lest You Be Judged—

Liberal or Conservative—getting back to basics.

(Based on writings by Ron McDonald: a pastoral counselor and a Quaker.)

**Leader:** Let us remember that we are in the presence of God.

**Leader:** Our political dialogue often descends into bitter diatribes that don't contribute to the national debate. At the root of this polarization is our misunderstanding of what it truly means to be a conservative or a liberal.

Conservative doesn't *just* mean pro-life, pro-America, pro-family and pro-(the present administration). Liberal doesn't *just* mean left-winger, pro-choice, tree-hugger, and critic (of the present administration).

**First Reading** (Part One):



Conservative means conserving what is good. It asserts that freedom means that the individual should have no barrier to success or failure, that government is best when it is local and that other countries should take of their own business.

A true conservative is neither opposed to welfare for those who are truly disabled, nor to all taxes and government programs.

If we want to conserve what is good, the public must do some things together—which is government's job.

(Pause)

**Leader:** Our response is taken from **Psalm 94**.

**Right:**

<sup>1</sup> O LORD , the God who avenges,  
O God who avenges, shine forth.

**Left:** <sup>2</sup> Rise up, O Judge of the earth;  
pay back to the proud what they deserve.

**Right:** <sup>3</sup> How long will the wicked, O LORD ,  
how long will the wicked be jubilant?

**Second Reading** (Part Two):

Liberal means openness to different people and new ideas. Liberals assert that we must protect the liberty and opportunity of all people especially those who are oppressed. Government should treat equally the people whether wealthy or poor, and we must be realistic about the need for some to receive extra help for their success.



There are barriers to success that are more than economic (such as racism), and liberals believe government must intervene to remove them, often at a federal level. The public should protect human rights at home and abroad, for if one person is not free, all are not free.

*(Pause)*

**Leader:** Response

**Left:** <sup>20</sup> Can a corrupt throne be allied with you—one that brings on misery by its decrees?

**Right:** <sup>21</sup> They band together against the righteous and condemn the innocent to death.

**ALL:** <sup>22</sup> But the LORD has become my fortress, and my God the rock in whom I take refuge.

*(Pause for reflection)*

**Leader:** Can't we be both conservative and liberal? Can't someone work hard to conserve what is good while being open to others and new ideas? Our response:

**Right:** If a conservative doesn't have some degree of openness to different people or new ideas—

**Left:** or if a liberal doesn't care about protecting what is good, then they are just closed-minded ideologs.

**Right:** "Conservative" and "liberal" are bankrupt terms that can no longer finance anything worthwhile.

**Left:** We would do ourselves a great service to take "conservative" and "liberal" out of bankruptcy and redeem them for what they really are.

**Leader:** Let us pray for each other during this time of national debate and discussion. Let us look for the common ground and new insight into others' points of view. Let us remember that we are one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Let us pray for the needs of our nation. (Intentions)

**Leader:** Our Father.....

**Together:** Father, you know our hearts. Sustain us during these days when our country is weighing matters of national importance. Help us renew our vision of our country, our land, our people, our friends and our foes, remembering that we are all brothers and sisters—children of God. May you see and love in us what you see and love in your own Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

**Leader:** St. John Baptist de La Salle

**All:** Pray for us.

**Leader:** Live Jesus, in our hearts

**All:** Forever!



Arranged by Brother Michael Livaudais, FSC