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The most central concern is not the necessity of a checklist to be told of what issues to look out for but for an awareness of the dignity of the human person that all those engaged or dislocated in the political process ought to consider.

In *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict focuses on “integral human development” and the need to address “identity, the meaning of human life, and the dignity of the human person”.

By encouraging people to engage in reflecting on basic questions of “who we are” and “where we are to go” perhaps sights could be raised above competing for short term advantage in a frantic public political fight.

Raising the larger questions of “who we are” opens up space that the political debate now seems to be unable to create.

What is desperately lacking is the need to inject *vision* into the shared political project (“without vision the people perish”) in terms of opening up new horizons and wider-ranging contexts that include all humanity.

We are constantly being told that poverty is an issue which simply will not go away. This is the case both home and abroad. Therefore it is necessary that people of faith are reminded in the huge gulf which exists between the extremely poor and the extremely rich.

The following words of Archbishop Oscar Romero seem particularly pertinent at this time:

“The guarantee of one’s prayer is not saying a lot of words. The guarantee of one’s petition is very easy to know: how do I treat the poor? Because that is where God is. The degree to which you approach them and the love with which you approach them, or the scorn with which you approach them - that is how you approach your God. What you do to them. You do to God. The way you look at them is the way you look at God”. Archbishop Oscar Romero, *Living God’s Justice*.