

## Mary Grey (Theologian)

Why Catholics/ Christians/people should engage in the political process.

First, because our faith is deeply-rooted in the Common Good in a more fundamental way than self-interested motives. As Catholics we have a long historical memory, not only back to the beginning of the 19th century when Catholics could not engage in public life and had a long struggle to practice faith publicly; but before then back to the memory of Christendom: even if this was flawed in many ways (in its attitudes to Jews and Muslims, for example), we owe a debt to the heritage of the mediaeval world.

Secondly, our ideas on the Common Good underpin our convictions that the privileged focus should be on the poorest sections of community, here in Britain and in the poorest countries of the world. Our justice focus will refuse to allow the global issues of debt and fair trade to become marginal at election time.

Thirdly, our commitment to God's creation, will refuse to let environmental concerns be pushed to the background.

As Christians we also have strong concerns for peace and peace-making traditions. The war in Afghanistan and the Middle-East turmoil is a great concern and it is vital that we press candidates to develop a vision as to a peaceful end to the conflict(s).

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