

ELECTION 2024



Weigh Your Conscience Before Casting Your Ballot

On November 5th, 2024, all Americans eligible to vote will have the opportunity to shape our form of government for the next 2 years and beyond. In the midst of the commotion surrounding elections, especially presidential races, it is worth taking time to reflect on how fortunate we are to live in a country where we are able to choose our leaders.

Before casting our ballot, we have the obligation to reflect on the issues affecting our state and our nation. To help guide us on the particular issues of concern to the Catholic Church, we offer the following as a reminder.

Millions of dollars are spent trying to influence how you will cast your ballot, so it is up to each of us to both form and inform our conscience by recalling the heart of the Gospel and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

What do we mean when we refer to “conscience?”

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Moral conscience, present at the heart of the person, enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil. It also judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil. It bears witness to the authority of truth in reference to the supreme Good which the human person is drawn, and it welcomes the commandments. When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking.” (1777)

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has re-issued its document, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, which may be found at:

<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/upload/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship.pdf>

This note will not tell you who to vote for, but it will help you to reflect on the issues and the person that can best promote the common good for each office. **We ask that you keep in mind the following questions that stem from the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching.**

- ✓ Does the Candidate work to protect sacred human life from conception to natural death? Does the candidate oppose abortion, physician-assisted suicide, human cloning and racism? These are all evils that must be guarded against and avoided.
- ✓ Does the candidate care for God’s creation? Does the candidate support policies that protect the planet and understand the importance of our stewardship of the Earth?
- ✓ Does the candidate recognize traditional marriage and family as the central social institutions that must be supported?
- ✓ Does the candidate recognize that every person has a fundamental right to life and to those things required for human decency, including food, water, shelter, employment and healthcare?
- ✓ Does the candidate embrace all those in greatest need who deserve our preferential concerns, such as children, the disabled, the elderly, refugees, the unemployed and the poor?
- ✓ Does the candidate recognize policies that promote basic rights for workers, such as fair wages, workplace safety, collective bargaining, and the right to private property and economic initiatives?
- ✓ Does the candidate recognize that whatever our national, racial, ethnic or ideological differences, we are all our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers? We must all work to create unity through dialogue and a civil discourse that is respectful to others.