



All of Our Voices are Needed

This page will discuss the responsibilities and challenges that faithful Catholics face in light of the upcoming election. When looking at leaders, laws, and issues that affect our state and nation, we need to be informed about the various impacts that these leaders, laws, and issues will have in our society.

It All Begins with the Right to Vote

We have an opportunity to have a voice and our Catholic faith urges us to use this voice for the common good of all people:

“It is the *duty of citizens* to contribute along with the civil authorities to the good of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity, and freedom. The love and service of *one's country* follow from the duty of gratitude and belong to the order of charity. Submission to legitimate authorities and service of the common good require citizens to fulfill their roles in the life of the political community.” ([Catechism of the Catholic Church #2239](#))

“Submission to authority and co-responsibility for the common good make it morally obligatory to pay taxes, to exercise the right to vote, and to defend one's country. . .” ([Catechism of the Catholic Church #2240](#))

“The Church equips its members to address political and social questions by helping them to develop a well-formed conscience. Catholics have a serious and lifelong obligation to form their consciences in accord with human reason and the teaching of the Church. Conscience is not something that allows us to justify doing whatever we want, nor is it a mere “feeling” about what we should or should not do. Rather, conscience is the voice of God resounding in the human heart, revealing the truth to us and calling us to do what is good while shunning what is evil.” ([Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship #17](#))

Guidelines for Choosing Among Candidates - *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship #36-37*

“When all candidates hold a position that promotes an intrinsically evil act, the conscientious voter faces a dilemma. The voter may decide to take the extraordinary step of not voting for any candidate or, after careful deliberation, may decide to vote for the candidate deemed less likely to advance such a morally flawed position and more likely to pursue other authentic human goods.” ([#36](#))

“In making these decisions, it is essential for Catholics to be guided by a well-formed conscience that recognizes that all issues do not carry the same moral weight and that the moral obligation to oppose policies promoting intrinsically evil acts has a special claim on our consciences and our actions. These decisions should take into account a candidate's commitments, character, integrity, and ability to influence a given issue. In the end, this is a decision to be made by each Catholic guided by a conscience formed by Catholic moral teaching.” ([#37](#))

What is an Intrinsically Evil Act? - *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship #21-22*

“Aided by the virtue of prudence in the exercise of well-formed consciences, Catholics are called to make practical judgments regarding good and evil choices in the political arena.” ([#21](#))

“There are some things we must never do, as individuals or as a society, because they are always incompatible with love of God and neighbor. Such actions are so deeply flawed that they are always opposed to the authentic good of persons. These are called “intrinsically evil” actions. They must always be rejected and opposed and must never be supported or condoned. . .” ([#22](#))

Please visit www.usccb.org or www.stlawrence.org to view or download the complete documents cited in this aid.

