

HOW TO VOTE

In November, 2015, the American Bishops met to revise a prior document which helped Catholics to properly frame their vote. This new document was intended to deal with the “Francis Factor.” As we know, even just from the Pope Francis’s visit last Fall, we are to consider a very large range of issues to properly cast our vote in accordance with our conscience.

I have a copy of the 42 page document available in the Parish Office. However, I am going to include the final portion of the document which defines the issues to consider this November:

- “Address the preeminent requirement to protect the weakest in our midst—innocent unborn children by restricting and bringing to an end abortion and providing women in crisis pregnancies the support needed to make a decision for life.
- “Keep our nation from turning to violence to address fundamental problems ... abortions ... euthanasia and assisted suicide ... destruction of human embryos in the name of research ... death penalty ... and imprudent resort to war.
- “Protect the fundamental understanding of marriage ... promote the complementarity of the sexes and reject false ‘gender’ ideologies ... provide better support for family life ... so that ... parents raise their children with respect for life, sound moral values, and an ethic of stewardship and responsibility.
- “Achieve comprehensive immigration reform that offers a path to citizenship, treats immigrant workers fairly, prevents...separation... and maintains the integrity of our borders, respects the law and addresses the factors compelling people to leave....
- “Help families . . . overcome poverty, ensuring access to and choice in education . . . decent work at fair, living wages and adequate assistance for the vulnerable . . . while . . . helping to overcome widespread hunger and poverty around the world, especially in the areas of development assistance, debt relief, and international trade.
- “Provide health care while respecting human life, human dignity, and religious freedom in our health care system.
- “Continue to oppose policies that reflect prejudice, hostility toward immigrants, religious bigotry, and other forms of unjust discrimination.
- “Encourage . . . work(ing) together to overcome poverty, pursue the common good, and care for creation.
- “Establish and comply with moral limits on the use of military force . . . with a special view to seeking a responsible and effective response for ending the persecutions of Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East and other parts of the world.”
- Join with others around the world to pursue peace, protect human rights and religious liberty, and advance economic justice and care for creation.” (pp. 36-37)

You can find the document, entitled “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States” at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/upload/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship.pdf>.

If you cannot download it or you do not have access to a computer, I have printed out a copy that is available in the Parish Office. You can come visit and read the document when you have the time.