

## VOTING CATHOLIC

The elections are quickly approaching and our vote, as Catholics, is perhaps the most important vote we will ever have to make in our entire life time, especially regarding the future of our nation. We live in extremely troubling times, to say the least. Our nation is so deeply divided and polarized on so many issues it makes one wonder if we will ever recover. What we see taking place before our very eyes in the political arena and on our city streets is more than merely a political battle, however. It is a spiritual battle between the forces of good and evil. It is a battle for individual souls and for the very collective soul of our nation.

So before casting our ballot this November, it is of utmost importance that we, as Catholics and disciples of Jesus Christ, first remember who we are and that we belong to Christ and to Him alone. St. Paul says to Catholics in 1 Cor. 6:19, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that *you are not your own*. For you have been purchased at a price”. In Romans 14:7-8, he says, “None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s”. In other words, as a disciple of Jesus, I belong to Him and to His Church before I belong to any particular political party. My allegiance is first and foremost to Jesus Christ and to His Church before it is to any political party. Therefore, as a Catholic and as His disciple, my vote must not be based merely on my party affiliation (Republican, Democrat, etc.), personal feelings or opinions regarding a particular candidate, but upon a well-informed conscience and upon my faith in Jesus Christ and the teachings He has entrusted to us, His Church. No political candidate is perfect and no political platform will perfectly align with the teachings of Christ and His Church. Yet, regardless of our political party affiliation, as Catholics we have a moral obligation to choose a candidate whose political platform best aligns with the teachings of our Faith. For example, among all the important political and moral issues (i.e., immigration, taxes, economy, abortion, religious liberties, etc.) we must face, the most preeminent issue in any election is always that regarding human life (i.e., abortion and euthanasia). That does not necessarily mean I am a “single issue voter”. What it means is that, as I prayerfully consider this candidate’s political platform as a whole, the first question I must ask is: does this candidate defend an individual’s right to life, most especially that of the unborn child? Is this candidate pro-life or pro-choice (pro-abortion) or pro-euthanasia? For a Catholic to freely vote for a pro-choice candidate with the intent to explicitly support the legalization of abortion would be a very grave offense (sin) to God Himself who is the very source of all life. This is not only anti-Catholic and anti-Christian, it is anti-Christ. Being an intrinsic evil (i.e., murder), abortion is never acceptable under any circumstances. Jesus says, I am the way and the truth and the life” (Jn. 14:6). Another very important issue that we must also prayerfully consider as Catholics, and that is also under serious attack today, is our freedom to worship God. Will this candidate and their political platform truly protect my religious liberties as a Catholic?

As Catholics and as disciples of Jesus Christ, let us truly be Catholic and not merely by name. May the good Lord give us the courage and humility to truly walk the walk and to cease giving God merely lip service. Let our allegiance be first and foremost to Him and to His Church and not merely to our own political party affiliation. Jesus tells us clearly in Matthew 5:13-16 that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and that our light must shine before others, that they (the world) may see [our] good deeds and glorify [our] heavenly Father. Our mission is to be Christ in this world. If we, as Catholics and as disciples of Jesus Christ, do not take a stand for truth and for the protection of all life, then who will? So, may the light of Christ within us shine brightly and His voice be heard in the voting booth this November, by first and foremost standing up for life and for truth, for Christ Himself. If we are true to who we are as Christians and faithful to Christ and His teachings, then He, in turn, will be true to us and will restore us to who He intended us to be from our very founding: “One nation under God with liberty and justice for all”. God bless you all and God bless America!

**- Fr. Mark Nolte**

For more information regarding guidelines for Catholic voters please go to:  
<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/upload/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship.pdf>