



Duty of Catholics to Vote, and to vote for pro-life lawmakers

The Catechism is clear: it is the government's responsibility to protect innocent human lives and it must do so through legislation. Voters must remind and hold accountable those legislators.

2273 The inalienable right to life of every innocent human individual is a *constitutive element of a civil society and its legislation*:

"The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the state; they belong to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his origin. Among such fundamental rights one should mention in this regard every human being's right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death."

Joint Statement of Bishops Kevin Farrell and Kevin Vann (Vann, then of Dallas, now of Orange, CA) 2008

This year, Respect Life Month takes on a more profound meaning as we face an election in our country where the protection of human life itself, particularly that of the unborn, is very much at stake. Therefore, as your Bishops, we wish to take this opportunity to provide clear guidance on the proper formation of conscience concerning voting as faithful Catholics and to articulate the Church's clear and unambiguous teaching on life issues as they relate to other issues of concern.

The Church teaches that all Catholics should participate as "faithful citizens" in the public square, especially through our voice in the voting booth, and that we have the responsibility to treat the decision for whom we will vote for with profound moral seriousness. We must approach the right and duty to vote with a properly formed and informed conscience in accordance with the teachings of the Church."

Statement of US Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*

"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. A prime example is the intentional taking of innocent human

life, as in abortion and euthanasia. In our nation, 'abortion and euthanasia have become preeminent threats to human dignity because they directly attack life itself, the most fundamental human good and the condition for all others' (Living the Gospel of Life, no. 5). It is a mistake with grave moral consequences to treat the destruction of innocent human life merely as a matter of individual choice. A legal system that violates the basic right to life on the grounds of choice is fundamentally flawed." (22)

When other public issues are offered as distraction

There are some, even in the Church, who are seeking to 'redefine the right to life' or deflect and distract from its significance by inserting other issues. This is a seriously evil action in seeking the faithful to stumble, or to encourage them to vote in a way that may promote abortion legislation via promoting pro-death legislators.

"The deliberate killing of innocent life is a uniquely wicked act. No amount of contextualizing or deflecting our attention to other issues can obscure that." Archbishop Chaput of Philadelphia, August 2015

The State of California currently:

- Funds abortion on demand
- Underwrites abortion and its marketing via taxpayer dollars
- Pays for human experiments on human embryos and embryo farms (Prop 71)
- Approves the promotion and implementation of assisted suicide on the medically and emotionally vulnerable. (AB 282, 2018)