



DIocese OF LAKE CHARLES

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Office of the Bishop

October 15, 2020
St. Teresa of Avila

Dear Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Lake Charles,

Greetings in the Lord who is our hope! With the destructive storms of recent weeks occupying our time and efforts, we are acutely aware of the challenges which face us for years to come in rebuilding our homes, businesses, schools, churches, and facilities. At the same time, an important election is fast approaching. As I have done in the past, I wish to offer you a brief guidance and to concentrate on the importance of conscience for the Catholic voter.

The integrity of one's conscience requires voting for the candidate who intends to uphold the greatest moral good according to the authentic magisterium of the Church. The obligation is particularly serious where the fundamental right to life is denied. The threat of abortion and protecting human life remains a "preeminent priority" (cf. USCCB, "Introductory Letter," *Faithful Citizenship*, 2020) for us as Catholics.

The more fundamental the issue, like human life, marriage or religious freedom, the greater priority the issue possesses in the judgment of correct conscience. The exercise of a correct conscience requires that a Catholic vote for the candidate whose positions best correspond to the Church's moral teaching on such essential issues.

The question to ask is a defining one. In voting for a candidate, to what end am I contributing? What goal am I seeking to accomplish? Simply stated, voting both endorses a candidate's goals and contributes to accomplishing them.

My guidance is offered without prejudice to any candidate or political party. It is intended rather to remind the Catholics of this Diocese that voting is a serious matter and can have immediate as well as eternal consequences, for we will ultimately stand before God for the decisions we make and the actions we take (cf. Romans 14:12).

With prayers for your intentions and the assurance of our Lord's constant care for us, I remain

Devotedly yours in our Lord,

✠ Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles