



Office of the Vicar General

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Guidelines for Election Season

1 July 2020

Dear Co-Workers in the Vineyard:

In a few days' time, we will celebrate the birth of our nation on July 4th and the freedom, liberty and political involvement that we have come to enjoy over the last 244 years. One of the ways that we continue to advance every person's right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is through our active involvement in choosing those who will lead and represent us at the local, state and national level. This November, we will have the opportunity to elect a number of government officials, most notably the President of the United States. The decisions we make should be based on discernment of the issues and the vetting of candidates in light of Catholic teaching.

As pastoral leaders throughout the diocese we have the responsibility to help form and educate the consciences of the faithful. Those in pastoral leadership are reminded that information regarding the upcoming elections at all levels is to remain non-partisan, focused rather on the principles of Catholic social teaching that will enable people to make informed decisions. Individuals and parishes are to refrain from endorsing or opposing any particular candidate or party from the pulpit or other public forums that could be construed as Church endorsement.

In the Diocese of Fairbanks the resources found on the USCCB's webpage "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" are the only materials to be endorsed and distributed in parishes. All the resources provided can be posted to social media pages and/or printed out and distributed to parishioners. A link will be posted to the diocesan webpage, although you can directly access the page at: <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/index.cfm>.

Please encourage the faithful to educate themselves on candidates and ballot measures, become informed on key issues and to vote. Encourage respectful conversation and dialogue between people. The building up of the Kingdom and the common good can only happen when we actively participate in civil discourse and engage our right to choose the leadership of our communities, state and nation.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Robert Fath, JCL
Vicar General