

Voting like a Catholic

For Catholics, the voting process is simply a variation of the process we should use in making all of our life decisions: if we turn to God in prayer, He will open our ears and our eyes, and through us he will cause His justice to flourish. Isaiah 35:4-7a

This process will work particularly when the choices are tough.

1 Register!

The very first step is to confirm that you are registered as a voter. Instructions can be found at: [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov)

2 Pray.

We must pray devoutly throughout the entire voting process, asking for guidance as we try to decide which party or which candidate to support. We should share our hopes and fears for society, our neighbors, our selves, and the world.

If we do that devoutly, God will open our ears and eyes, guiding us to the vote He wants us to cast – whether or not it is the same vote He might desire from others: our thoughts are not God’s thoughts, we have no idea what God’s plans are. As with the loaves and fishes, God can make whatever He wants of just a few votes.

3 Look, learn, listen & chat.

We are called to inform ourselves responsibly concerning (a) the teachings of the Church and (b) issues relevant to the election. This involves identifying and consulting responsible news sources and familiarizing ourselves with the principles and values of Catholic Social Teaching. Comprehensive information concerning Catholic teaching and party positions on the issues can be found at the Catholic Conscience website: [CatholicConscience.org/USA](https://www.CatholicConscience.org/USA)

As we learn, we should seek out those around us, at home, church, and work, and discuss the issues with others, listening respectfully and evaluating all appropriate options.

4 Choose confidently.

If we pray devoutly, God will open our ears, eyes, and hearts, and will lead us to the choice He wants from us, so that we can help accomplish His plan. We can vote with confidence! Visit: [CatholicConscience.org/USA](https://www.CatholicConscience.org/USA)

5 Vote.

Instructions for finding your polling place or voting by mail can be found at website: [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov)

6 Stay engaged.

Once the election is over, stay actively and respectfully engaged with those who have been elected – whether they are your own preferred candidates or not. This is important if we hope to improve our choices in the future. While gently sharing with them our concerns about problems, we should remember to thank them for the sacrifices they have made to serve!

Even when choices seem clear, we should neither ignore the process nor skip steps: we Catholics have both a civic duty to stay informed and a calling to seek God's help in choosing. Nor can we responsibly abstain from voting, except in extreme and very clear-cut circumstances. If we don't vote or stay engaged between elections, how can we hope to improve things? And how, when our time comes and we face judgment, will we explain the fact that we failed to do what we could to help build a world pleasing to God?

Sometimes our choices can be very difficult. For more information on a Catholic approach to voting, particularly when choices are difficult, consult the *Discerning your vote as a Catholic* publication at catholicconscience.org/download/7425/

*“As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life.”
Catechism of the Catholic Church, Section 1915*

Catholics should consider a broad range of issues in voting.

We are called to inform ourselves on the positions of the candidates and parties on the full range of issues, including the following. For a side-by-side comparison of party positions on these issues, visit CatholicConscience.org/USA.

The Sanctity of Human Life: from Conception to Natural Death

Abortion, Euthanasia & Alternatives | Human Engineering | Population Control

Stewardship of Creation

Climate Change | Species, Diversity & Wildlife | Energy & Resources | Sustainable Development

Family, Community & the Common Good

Role of the Family | Healthcare | Education & Young Workers | Culture Arts & Tourism

An Economy for All

The Dignity of Work | Poverty Reduction | Labour, Employment, Corporations, & Industries

The Individual & Society: Rights, Responsibility, & Subsidiarity

Civil Liberties | Human Rights | Responsibilities: Participation & Subsidiarity

Solidarity

Supporting the Marginalized | Indigenous Peoples | Rural Communities | Refugees & Newcomers

Good Government: Democracy, Justice, & Peace

Role & Purpose of Government | Stewardship & Reform | Provinces, Territories, Municipalities | International Relations & Defense | Public Safety