

The Sanctity of Human Life: from Conception to Natural Death

Abortion, Euthanasia & Alternatives | Human Engineering | Population Control

Catholic Teaching

Catholics care about the sanctity of life because the entire purpose of each soul God endows with life is to find its way back to God, by loving God and caring for all the souls God has placed around it. **Voluntary termination of life any time between conception and natural death necessarily frustrates that purpose.**

The source of human dignity is the likeness to God that is bestowed on each of us at the moment we are conceived. We respond appropriately to this gift by using all the time, talent, and treasure that God has entrusted to us to seek and grow closer to God, by sharing in His continuing act of creation and caring for those around us. **Our first purpose is to seek God, especially in one another.** If we do that, everything else will be given to us. **Anything that interferes with that is contrary to the Word of God.** *Genesis chapter 1; Matthew chapters 6, 22 & 25*

Abortion & Euthanasia

*"You shall not kill."
– the 5th Commandment*

The right to life from conception to natural death is the foundation of all Catholic Social Teaching, and in particular, implies the illicitness of every form of procured abortion and of euthanasia. – 155, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

*"This is not something subject to alleged reforms or 'modernizations.' It is not 'progressive' to try to resolve problems by eliminating a human life. Who can remain unmoved before such painful situations?"
– Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium 214*

Human Engineering

Cloning and Cell Manipulation

An issue of particular social and cultural significance today, because of its many and serious moral implications, is human cloning... the simple replication of normal cells or of a portion of DNA presents no particular ethical problem. Very different, however, is cloning understood in the proper sense. Such cloning is contrary to the dignity of human procreation because it takes place in total absence of an act of personal love between spouses, being agamic and asexual reproduction. In the second place, this type of reproduction represents a form of total domination over the reproduced individual on the part of the one reproducing it...



DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Sanctity of Life

Abortion & Alternatives for Mothers & Children

The party states, among its key values, that:

- it encourages respect for all life forms, and increased attention to the preservation of biodiversity
- every woman should be able to access high-quality reproductive health care services, including safe and legal abortion.

The party further states that:

- it strongly and unequivocally supports a mother's decision to have a child, including by ensuring safe and healthy pregnancy and birth, and support services, including adoption and social support services
- it is committed to a society in which children can thrive physically, emotionally, educationally, and spiritually, and advocates ending discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in adoption and foster parenting

The party advocates:

- repeal of the Title X domestic gag rule and restored funding for Planned Parenthood
- repeal of the Hyde Amendment, and codification of the right to reproductive freedom.
- correction of discrimination and barriers that inhibit access to reproductive health services
- promoting safe access to abortion to women and girls in other countries

Assisted Suicide & Alternatives for the Stricken and for Families

The party has released no official statement concerning its policies on assisted suicide and alternatives for patients or family.

Human Engineering

Stem cell & embryo research

The party has released no official statement concerning its policies on cloning or cell manipulation.

Gender elective surgery

The party has released no official statement concerning its policies on gender elective surgery.

Population & birth control

The party advocates a woman's full right to reproductive choice.

Human trafficking

The party advocates:

- working with partners and allies to address the causes of and eliminate human trafficking



GREEN PARTY

Abortion & Alternatives for Mothers & Children

The party states that:

- women's rights must be protected and expanded to guarantee each woman's right as a full participant in society, free from sexual harassment, job discrimination or interference in the intensely personal choice about whether to have a child
- women's right to control their bodies is non-negotiable. It is essential that the option of a safe, legal abortion remains available

Cloning for therapeutic use does not attenuate its moral gravity, because in order that such cells may be removed the embryo must first be created and then destroyed.
-236, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Gender Identity & Election

Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity. Physical, moral and spiritual difference and complementarities are oriented towards the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life. -
224 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*
Men and women with homosexual tendencies must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. –
358 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Population Growth; Birth Control; Family Planning

Judgment concerning the interval of time between births, and that regarding the number of children, **belongs to the spouses alone.** This is one of their inalienable rights, **to be exercised before God...** The intervention of public authorities must be made in a way that **fully respects the freedom of the couple.** All programmes of economic assistance aimed at financing campaigns of sterilization and contraception are to be morally **condemned as affronts to the dignity of the person and the family.**

The answer to **questions connected with population growth** must instead be sought in simultaneous respect both of sexual morals and of social ethics, **promoting greater justice and authentic solidarity** so that dignity is given to life in all circumstances.

All reproductive techniques — such as the **donation of sperm or ova, surrogate motherhood, heterologous artificial fertilization** — that make use of the uterus of another woman or of gametes of persons **other than the married couple**, injuring the right of the child to be born of one father and one mother who are father and mother **are ethically unacceptable** both from a biological and from a legal point of view. – 234-235, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

- the "morning-after" pill must be affordable and easily accessible without a prescription, together with a government-sponsored public relations campaign to educate women about this form of contraception
- clinics must be accessible and must offer advice on contraception and the means for contraception; consultation about abortion and the performance of abortions, and; abortion regardless of age or marital status
- contraception and abortion must be included in all health insurance policies in the U.S., and any state government must be able to legally offer these services free of charge to women at the poverty level
- public health agencies operating abroad should be allowed to offer family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that ask for those services. We oppose our government's habit of cutting family planning funds when those funds go to agencies in foreign countries that give out contraceptive devices, offer advice on abortion, and perform abortions
- it encourages women and men to prevent unwanted pregnancies. It is the inalienable right and duty of every woman to learn about her body and to be aware of the phases of her menstrual cycle, and it is the duty for every man to be aware of the functions and health of his and his partner's bodies. This information is necessary for self-determination, to make informed decisions, and to prevent unintended consequences. Unplanned conception takes control away from individuals and makes them subject to external controls

Human Engineering

Population control

The party states that:

- humans have a unique responsibility for stewardship of the Earth. No species, especially on the upper end of the food chain, can have unchecked exponential growth without depleting the Earth's carrying capacity. Human population expands at the expense of other species
- limiting the discussion to population numbers and birthrates diverts attention from over-consumption in the industrial world and historic patterns of exploitation of developing countries
- consumption-oriented lifestyles have resulted in a minority of people consuming a majority of resources. This is as significant a threat to the Earth's carrying capacity as the high birth rates in low-consumption countries
- current global demographics demonstrate that economic wellbeing promotes low birthrates.
- documented evidence suggests that when women have control over their lives, birthrates decrease
- a major barrier to the improvement of women's reproductive health is a lack of shared responsibility between men and women in family planning
- higher human consumption rates and populations increase the pressure on the environment in every ecological problem area. Those living in the industrialized world must end the habits of waste and over-consumption that place as much stress on the environment as does population growth in developing nations
- funds must be allocated for expanded scientific research into safer and more effective birth control techniques and devices

Genetic engineering

The party states that since the efforts to clone animals — and eventually humans—has been undertaken by profit-making corporations, the purpose behind such projects is to manufacture commodities. To classify a human (or any part thereof, including human DNA and body organs) as a commodity is to turn human beings into property.

Gender Identity & Election

The party states that:

- it affirms the right of all persons to self-determination with regard to gender identity and sex
- it affirms the right of choosing non-binary and gender fluid identification, and therefore supports the right of individuals to be free from coercion and involuntary assignment of gender or sex

Human Trafficking

The party states that:

- of the millions of humans trafficked worldwide, the large majority are women and children who are bought and sold as slaves. Most are sold over and over again for forced sex prostitution. Estimates of human trafficking in the U.S. vary greatly from 18,000 to 50,000 to over 100,000 with a worldwide estimate of 12.5 million.

The party advocates:

- new U.S. legislation relating to prostitution modeled on the Swedish law passed in 1999, now adopted by other countries and being considered by more, that has drastically reduced human trafficking and prostitution in Sweden, which criminalizes the purchase of services from prostitutes, pimps and brothel keepers instead of criminalizing the prostitutes
- all efforts to eradicate this extreme abuse of human rights, including but not limited to enforcement of existing laws and passage of tough new ones, punishing traffickers, aiding victims, increasing public awareness, reforming immigration laws, supporting existing programs and creating new ones

- enforcement of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (HR 3244) signed into law on October 28, 2000. This Act authorizes funding for the prevention of trade in human beings and for protecting victims

The party has published no official statement of its positions on

- *assisted suicide, or alternatives for patients and families*



LIBERTARIAN PARTY

Abortion

The party states that:

- recognizing that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on all sides, it believes that government should be kept out of the matter, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration
- its silence about any particular government law, regulation, ordinance, directive, edict, control, regulatory agency, activity, or machination should not be construed to imply approval

The party has published no official statement of its positions on:

- *euthanasia, assisted suicide, or alternatives for patients and families*
- *human engineering, including gender identity & election*



REPUBLICAN PARTY

Sanctity of Life

Abortion & Alternatives for Mothers & Children

The party:

- advocates the Constitutional guarantee that no one can "be deprived of life, liberty or property," and its application to unborn children
- supports amendment of the Constitution to affirm that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to children before birth
- opposes use of public funds to perform or promote abortion, or the sale of fetal body parts
- respects states' authority to exclude abortion from Medicaid and other health care programs
- affirms the moral obligation to assist women who face unplanned pregnancy, and supports legislation that requires financial responsibility for the child be equally borne by both the mother and father upon conception until the child reaches adulthood
- supports funding for adoption assistance
- supports conscience rights for health care providers in providing abortions and euthanasia, or making referrals therefor
- supports the parental right of consent prior to abortions by minors

Euthanasia & Assisted Suicide

The party:

- opposes euthanasia and assisted suicide, including non-consensual withholding or withdrawal of care or treatment including food and water, from individuals with disabilities, newborns, the elderly, and the infirm
- advocates restoration of the Drug Enforcement Administration's ban on the use of controlled substances for physician-assisted suicide

Human Engineering

Stem cell & embryo research

The party:

- supports non-embryonic stem-cell research
- opposes embryonic stem-cell research, and federal funding of it
- supports adult stem cell research and urges restoration of the national placental stem cell bank

Gender Election & Identity

The party condemns sex-selection abortions

Population & birth control

The party advocates:

- replacing 'family planning' programs in schools with courses in sexual risk avoidance which promote abstinence until marriage, in order to reduce unwanted pregnancies and sexually-transmitted disease
- banning school-based referrals or counseling for abortion and contraception

Human trafficking

The party advocates:

- tough penalties for those who traffic in human beings
- use of the full force of the law against those who engage in commercial sexual exploitation and forced or bonded labor of men, women, or children; involuntary domestic servitude; trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal; and the illegal recruitment and use of child soldiers
- increased diplomatic efforts and accountability for foreign governments to prosecute traffickers, including penalties for any public officials who may be complicit in trafficking
- strategizing with partners around the world to prevent demand for trafficking victims

Points to Ponder: Life & Human Dignity

Consider discussing the following questions with your local candidates, elected officials, and the parties, and with your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and fellow parishioners:

- If all souls are children of God, placed by God in this world to find their ways back to God and to help other souls in finding their own ways home, what limits should be placed on voluntary termination of human life, either prior to birth or at any time before death? What can or should be done at the federal level, and what should be left to the states, or to private, religious, or other non-profit organizations?
- What options are our society, including the church and other non-profit agencies in addition to government, offering, or able to offer, to reluctant or unwilling mothers as alternatives to abortion and to support unwanted children? What can or should be done at the local, or federal, or state level, or by private, religious, or other non-profit organizations?
- Are federal restrictions and controls on cloning and the use of human cells, fetuses, and body parts properly crafted? What, if anything, should be done differently including at the state level? Should there be more discussion of this serious moral issue in our society?
- To what extent should voluntary, elective services that are morally questionable to large numbers of individuals, such as the voluntary termination of life or the voluntary modification of gender, be financed publicly through mandatory taxation? If such services are to be offered, should they be financed by the individuals who elect to access them, or by sympathetic charities, or by dissenting taxpayers?

Stewardship of Creation

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

Catholic Teaching

God gave humans dominion over the earth, thereby making us stewards of creation as we work with Him in His continuing act of creation.

We must constantly consider how our actions glorify or harm this wonderful gift God has entrusted to us. **This is a multi-faceted question, which must not be over-simplified.**

With a vocation to glorify all life which includes respect for the inviolability and integrity of life, humans find themselves in the presence of all God's other creatures. We can and are obliged to put them at our own service and to enjoy them, but **our dominion over the world requires the exercise of responsibility.** It is not a freedom of arbitrary and selfish exploitation. All of creation has value and is "good" in the sight of God. This is a **marvelous challenge to human intellect.** – 112, 113, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church.*

Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue: it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience.
–23, 217, *Laudato Si'*

The Book of Genesis provides us with certain foundations of Christian anthropology, including the meaning of human activity in the world, which is linked to the discovery and respect of the laws of nature that God has inscribed in the created universe, so that humanity may live in it and care for it in accordance with God's will. – 37, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church.*

Climate Change

There is urgency to this issue. Every Pope since at least Paul VI has written of our need to shift to a more responsible use of the earth and its abundant resources. The Church accepts that that need is now urgent.

"A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system... **Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle,** production and consumption, in order to combat... at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it. It is true that there are other factors, yet a number of scientific studies indicate that most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases released **mainly as a result of human activity.** – Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, –23

Energy & Resources



DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Climate change

The party states that:

- climate change is a global emergency, and that there is no time to waste in taking action to protect Americans' lives and futures; that the US must lead the world in taking on the climate crisis, and not deny the science and accelerate the damage
- recent years have seen record-breaking storms, devastating wildfires, and historic floods

The party advocates:

- rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement and going further, to build thriving, equitable, and globally competitive clean energy economy that puts workers and communities first, and leaves no one behind
- achieving zero-emissions as soon as possible, and not later than 2050
- eliminating carbon pollutions from power plants by 2035
- requiring net zero emissions for all new buildings by 2030
- dramatic expansion of solar and wind energy through community-based and utility-scale systems, including installation of 500 million solar panels and 60,000 wind turbines within 5 years
- investment in clean energy, clean transportation, energy efficiency, and advanced manufacturing
- providing energy-efficiency upgrades to up to 2 million low-income homes and affordable & public housing projects
- transitioning the entire US fleet of 500,000 school buses to zero-emission vehicles within 5 years
- installation of 500,000 public charging stations for electric vehicles
- reversing rollbacks of climate and environmental protections
- rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement
- reducing harmful methane and carbon pollution from the energy sector
- investing to create millions of jobs in clean tech, energy efficiency, clean transportation, and sustainable agriculture
- requiring companies to report polluters in their operations and supply chains

Conservation & Sustainable Development

The party advocates:

- protecting wildlife habitats and biodiversity, and growing natural carbon sinks by conserving 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030
- zero-emissions agriculture and aquaculture
- investment in sustainable, low-carbon and organic agriculture and aquaculture
- historic investments in cleanup of legacy pollution sites
- increased support for wetlands restoration

Species, Diversity & Wildlife

The party has released no official statement concerning its policies on species diversity and wildlife



GREEN PARTY

Stewardship of Creation

The party states, among its ten key principles, that:

- human societies must function with the understanding that we are part of nature, not separate from nature
- the human community is an element of the Earth community. All human endeavors are situated within the dynamics of the biosphere. If we wish to have sustainable institutions and enterprises, they must fit well with the processes of the Earth.
- the nation must maintain an ecological balance and live within the ecological and resource limits of our communities and our planet

The good steward neither allows the resources entrusted to him to lie fallow or to fail to produce their proper fruit, nor does he waste or destroy them (*Matthew 25:14-30*). Rather, he uses them responsibly, for the Lord's purposes, to realize their increase so that he may enjoy his livelihood and provide for the good of his family, his descendants, and his neighbors.

Humanity's relationship with creation and the creatures of the earth "requires the exercise of responsibility, it is not a freedom of arbitrary and selfish exploitation." – 115, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

One of the higher priority issues in economics is the utilization of resources, that is, of all those goods and services to which economic subjects — producers and consumers in the private and public spheres — attribute value because of their inherent usefulness in the areas of production and consumption... **Resources in nature are quantitatively scarce**, which means that each individual economic subject, as well as each individual society, must necessarily come up with a plan for their utilization in **the most rational way possible**, following the logic dictated by the "principle of economizing." – 346, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Because of the powerful means of transformation offered by technological civilization, it seems that **the balance between man and the environment has reached a critical point...** A reductionistic conception quickly spread, starting from **the presupposition — which was seen to be erroneous — that an infinite quantity of energy and resources are available**, that it is possible to renew them quickly, and that the negative effects of the exploitation of the natural order can be easily absorbed... – 461, 462, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Conservation & Sustainable Development

Care for the environment represents a challenge for all of humanity. It is a matter of **a common and universal duty, that of respecting a common good**, destined for all, by preventing anyone from using "with impunity the different categories of beings, whether living or inanimate — **animals, plants, the natural elements** — simply as one wishes, according to one's own economic needs."

Responsibility for the environment, the common heritage of mankind, extends not only to present needs but also to those of the future... This is a **responsibility that present generations have towards those of the future...** A correct understanding of the environment... at the same time...**must not absolutize nature and place it above the dignity of the human person himself.** In this latter case, one can go so far as to divinize nature or the earth, as can readily be seen in certain ecological movements that seek to gain an internationally guaranteed institutional status for their beliefs. – 346, 461-463, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Species Diversity & Wildlife

Man and woman find themselves also in the presence of all the other creatures. They can and are obliged to put them at their own service and to enjoy them, but their dominion over the world requires the exercise of responsibility, it is not a freedom of arbitrary and selfish

- it supports a sustainable society that utilizes resources in such a way that future generations will benefit and not suffer from the practices of our generation
- to these ends the nation must practice agriculture that replenishes the soil, move to an energy-efficient economy, and live in ways that respect the integrity of natural systems
- social actions and policies should be motivated by long-term goals, seeking to protect valuable natural resources and safely disposing of or 'unmaking' all waste we create, while developing a sustainable economics that does not depend on continual expansion for survival
- the nation's economy must counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by assuring that economic development, new technologies, and fiscal policies are responsible to future generations who will inherit the results of our actions
- the quality of all lives, rather than open-ended economic growth, should be the focus of future thinking and policy

Climate Change

The party states that:

- climate change is the gravest environmental, social and economic peril that humanity has ever met. Across the world, it is causing vanishing polar ice, melting glaciers, growing deserts, stronger storms, rising oceans, less biodiversity, deepening droughts, as well as more disease, hunger, strife and human misery
- greenhouse gases warm the Earth by trapping heat in the atmosphere. Much of that heat is initially absorbed by the ocean, creating roughly a 30-year delay in the impact of that heat at the surface of the planet. Practically speaking, that means that the melting glaciers and expanding deserts of 2009 were the result of greenhouse gases dumped into the atmosphere in the late 1970s, when the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was below 350 parts per million (ppm). To return to a safe level of greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere, we must reduce atmospheric greenhouse gases as quickly as possible to levels that existed before 1980, to 350ppm carbon dioxide.

The party advocates:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions at least 40% by 2020 and 95% by 2050, over 1990 levels
- science-based policies to curb climate change by expending maximum effort to preserve a planet friendly to life as we know it by curtailing greenhouse gas emissions and actively removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere
- enactment of an emergency Green New Deal to turn the tide on climate change, revive the economy and make wars for oil obsolete
- a WWII-scale national mobilization to halt climate change, the greatest threat to humanity in our history
- creation of 20 million jobs by transitioning to 100% clean renewable energy by 2030, and investing in public transit, sustainable agriculture, conservation and restoration of critical infrastructure, including ecosystems
- implementation of a Just Transition that empowers those communities and workers most impacted by climate change and the transition to a green economy
- supporting workers displaced by the shift away from fossil fuels with full income and benefits as they transition to alternative work
- community and worker ownership of our energy system
- treat energy as a human right
- building of a nationwide smart electricity grid that can pool and store power from a diversity of renewable sources, giving the nation clean, democratically-controlled, energy
- ending destructive energy extraction and associated infrastructure: fracking, tar sands, offshore drilling, oil trains, mountaintop removal, natural gas pipelines, and uranium mines
- halting any investment in fossil fuel infrastructure, including natural gas, and phase out all fossil fuel power plants
- phasing out nuclear power and end nuclear subsidies
- a Fee & Dividend system on fossil fuels to enable the free market to include the environmental costs of their extraction and use. These fees shall be applied as far upstream as possible, either when fuel passes from extraction to refining, distribution or consumption; or when it first enters the United States' jurisdiction. The carbon fee will initially be small, a dime per kilogram of carbon, to avoid creating a shock to the economy. The fee will be increased by 10% each year that global atmospheric carbon dioxide content is greater than 350 ppm, decreased 10% each year it's less than 300 ppm, and repealed entirely when it falls below 250 ppm
- strict, comprehensive compliance with the Clean Air Act. State and local clean air initiatives should advance and improve national efforts; for example, moving forward with stricter clean air and fuel efficiency standards, and with vehicle and fleet conversions
- further research on the damaging effects of hydrofluorocarbons and very short-lived substances (VSLs) on the ozone layer, and replacement of those causing destruction of ozone
- amendments to update the Montreal Protocol of 1987 to keep it consistent with current scientific findings regarding threats to the ozone layer

International Climate Treaty

The party states that:

exploitation. **All of creation has value and is “good” in the sight of God, who is its author.** Man must discover and respect its value. This is a marvellous challenge to his intellect, which should lift him up as on wings towards the **contemplation of the truth of all God’s creatures**, that is, the contemplation of what God sees as good in them. Man must recognize all of God’s creatures for what they are and establish with each of them a relationship of responsibility. – 113, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

“**Each of the various creatures**, willed in its own being, **reflects in its own way a ray of God’s infinite wisdom and goodness.** Man must respect the particular goodness of every creature, to avoid any disordered use of things which would be in contempt of the Creator and would bring disastrous consequences for human beings and their environment.” – 339, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

It is a responsibility that must mature on the basis of the global dimension of the present ecological crisis... This perspective takes on a particular importance when one considers, in the context of the close relationships that bind the various parts of the ecosystem, the environmental **value of biodiversity, which must be handled with a sense of responsibility** and adequately protected... -466, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

- the climate treaty reached in Paris in December, 2015 is inadequate to address the climate change crisis. The 195 nations involved pledged to reduce greenhouse gases. The pledges are not mandatory, however. The treaty does not require the phase out of fossil fuels, and it delays higher aid levels for poorer nations until 2025

The party advocates:

- legally binding commitments for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2020 and a 95% reduction by 2030 over 1990 levels

Repaying Climate Debt

The party advocates:

- paying for adaptation to climate change in countries with less responsibility for climate change, e.g., providing a carbon neutral development path for those countries that can no longer be permitted to develop by burning cheap fossil fuels

Conservation

The party states that:

- it is appalled by the country's withdrawal from serious efforts to limit greenhouse gases that are contributing mightily to global climate disruption
- land use policies must promote sustainable development and respect ecology
- land use practices must be founded on stewardship of the Earth, to honor the interconnected and interdependent nature of all life, to respect ecosystems and other species, while at the same time providing for human needs in a responsible and sustainable way

The party advocates:

- adoption of organic agriculture and the careful tending of our nation's precious remaining topsoil
- planetary efforts to slow the ever-increasing numbers of humans pressuring the ecosystems
- reduction of consumption of the world's raw materials by the industrialized Northern Hemisphere
- adopting a national zero waste policy. The less we consume and throw away, the less we will need to produce and replace
- to remove carbon from the atmosphere and stabilize the climate, use of ecological restoration techniques such as restoration of forests, grasslands, and farmlands by planting trees, reforestation and afforestation of public lands, and revegetation of grasslands with native species to prevent desertification and improve climate resilience
- encouraging regenerative agricultural techniques
- restoring ecosystems on privately-owned lands by providing incentives to landowners
- acknowledgement that every property right has an implied responsibility to provide for the common good of people, places and the planet
- formation and operation of cooperatives, non-profits, land trusts, co-housing, and other forms of communal and public interest management of land and resources
- promotion of livable urban environments to minimize urban sprawl
- matching urban populations with the carrying capacities of the bioregions in which our cities are located
- preservation and expansion of rural land use patterns that promote open space, healthy ecosystems, wildlife corridors and the ecologically sustainable agriculture, and of large continuous tracts of public and private land for wildlife habitat and biological diversity, to permit healthy, self-managing wildlife populations to exist in a natural state, and to promote complete ecosystems
- transition of rural communities into sustainable relationships with ranching, agriculture, forestry and mining
- rewards for farmers and ranchers for the ecosystem services they provide on private and public lands
- promotion of small-scale farmers and ranchers over large-scale corporate agriculture and ranching
- reforms of mining law and practice to better balance mining with other important public land uses; providing a fair financial return to taxpayers for resources extracted, and creating a fund for clean up of abandoned mines
- strict curbs on mercury emissions from metal mines
- elimination of public subsidies for livestock grazing on public lands
- ending sale of any portion our national parks, forests or coastlines

Water

The party states that:

- according to the United Nations, more than one billion people lack access to safe drinking water
- if current trends persist, by 2025 as much as two-thirds of the world's population will be living with a serious scarcity of water
- multinational corporations recognize these trends and are moving fast to monopolize water supplies around the world. They argue that privatizing water is the best way to allocate this valuable resource, and they are scheming to have water declared a human need so that it can be commodified and sold on the open market ensuring that the allocation of water will be based on principles of scarcity and profit maximization

- governments are signing away their control over their domestic water supplies by participating in trade treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement and in institutions such as the World Trade Organization
- the World Bank recently adopted a policy of water privatization and full-cost water pricing

The party advocates:

- because water is essential to all forms of life, an international declaration that water belongs to the Earth and all of its species
- leadership by the U.S. Government declaring water a fundamental human right and preventing efforts to privatize, export, and sell it for profit
- strong national and international laws to promote conservation, reclaim polluted water systems, develop water-supply restrictions, ban toxic and pesticide dumping, control or ban corporate farming, and curb transnational corporations that pollute water systems, including severe restriction of polluting mines
- banning privatization of water
- re-prioritization of policies achieve a truly sustainable water policy
- application of the principle of bioregionalism (living within the means of a region's natural resources) to future water policies
- mandating water efficient appliances and fixtures be used in all new construction, and promote retrofitting of older buildings
- promoting use of native landscaping and other drought resistant/ climate-appropriate plants, in order to reduce the need for irrigation
- promotion of drip irrigation systems where irrigation is necessary
- education citizens and enforcement of laws to end storm water pollution of water resources
- promoting appropriate reuse of "gray" and "black" waters we produce, e.g., for lawn watering and similar purposes
- promoting use of passive and natural systems (such as wetlands) for water and wastewater treatment
- upgrading and phasing out aging municipal sewage systems and treatment plants

Forestry

The party states that:

- forests are indispensable to human and animal life and must be protected. Globally, the planet has already lost 50% of our pre-colonial forests and the plant and animal communities they supported. Our rapidly increasing numbers, high-consumption rates, and profit incentives have resulted in massive forest destruction due to logging and development, and the Earth's remaining rain forests are being destroyed and transformed into cattle pastures or mono-crops for bio-fuels production
- tree mortality rates of 0.5 to 0.7% per year are natural. We are now witnessing local tree die-offs of 30 to 40% and even higher!
- forestry practices such as clearcutting also destroy the mycorrhizal fungi with which trees have a symbiotic relationship, and regeneration is slowed or impossible

To protect our forests, the party advocates:

- overhauling of state and U.S. Forest Service rules, and reform and restructuring of federal and state land-use policies to make our use environmentally sustainable, while allowing forests to provide a continuing supply of high quality wood products
- banning the harvest of Ancient Forests
- banning the export of raw logs and other minimally processed forest products (pulp, chips, carts, slabs, etc.), which causes American job loss
- subsidies for local watershed-based mills, to maximize employment opportunities through value-added processing, and promote sustainability and worker control
- using work projects, goats, and other sustainable methods to control undergrowth rather than spraying herbicides, especially near communities
- cultivation of hemp as a plentiful and renewable resource for the manufacture of paper and other forest products
- requiring all U.S. Government offices to use 100% post-consumer waste paper processed chlorine free, and that any new fiber necessary to the process come from alternative sources such as hemp or kenaf

Oceans

The party states that:

- the world's oceans, which are essential to life on Earth, are threatened by climate change, pollution, whaling, over fishing, factory fishing, bottom trawling, by catch, pirate fishing and fish farming. Yet simple, strong policy changes can rejuvenate the health of our oceans and planet

The party advocates:

- protection of 40% of the world's oceans as marine preserves, especially near shore coastal habitats, including determination of protected zones through a democratic process involving all stakeholders
- banning of offshore oil drilling and the siting of liquefied natural gas facilities off the U.S. coast
- ending use of once-through cooling process in and near coastal waters

- requiring secondary treatment of waste effluent before release
- the ban on international commercial whaling as well as other international efforts to protect endangered marine species
- banning of drift-net fishing and long-line fishing and phase out of factory trawling, and importation of fish and fish products caught by drift-nets and other illegal means
- mapping of undersea toxic dump sites, and investigation of methods of rendering them harmless
- banning importation of coral products and destruction of breakwaters. 13. Support the Law of the Sea Treaty that establishes the global sharing of ocean resources. 14. Support complete cleanup of existing and past oil spills. Cost of cleanups and compensation for affected communities should be paid by the corporations responsible for the spills.

Species, Diversity & Wildlife

The party states that:

- we humans have a moral responsibility to all of our natural relations of other species, many of which are facing extinction because we carelessly and permanently halt their long evolutionary journey
- continuing destruction of animal habitats threatens an ever-growing number of species with extinction, not only depriving these species of their existence, but future human generations of the enrichment of having these species on the Earth

The party advocates:

- reformulation of all policies concerning human settlement, food, energy, natural resources, water, coastal development, and industrialization to prevent further disruption of the non-human ecosystems' ability to maintain themselves
- promotion of and public access to seed banks and seed collections that emphasize traditional and heirloom seeds, and opposition to monopolistic production of high-tech hybrid seeds, which relies on non-sustainable methods such as single crop varieties bred with industrial traits and grown with high input of energy, chemicals, and pesticides and has led to a massive loss of biodiversity
- opposition of international trade agreements (NAFTA, GATT and the WTO in particular) that have precedent-setting provisions protecting transnational, corporate control of the intellectual property of genetic material, hybrid seeds, and proprietary products
- since the mark of a humane and civilized society lies in how we treat the least protected among us, extension of rights to other sentient, living beings, and an intelligent, compassionate approach to the treatment of animals
- in order to protect the health of continental ecosystems, a halt to the destruction of habitats, which are being sacrificed to unqualified economic expansion.

Energy & Resources

The party states that:

- the nation's houses and buildings, manufacturing processes, and industrial agriculture were all designed with the assumption of an endless supply of cheap and readily available fossil fuels, without thought for pollution and despoiling the land
- it is optimistic about the alternatives that now exist and that could be encouraged through tax policy and the market incentives of fuel efficiency
- it is committed to extending the greening of waste management by encouraging the spread of such practices as reduce, return, reuse, and recycle
- it strongly opposes recent attempts to roll back the federal environmental protection laws that safeguard our air, water, and soil

The party advocates:

- treating energy as a human right
- a nationwide smart electricity grid that can pool and store power from a diversity of renewable sources, giving the nation clean, democratically-controlled, energy
- ending destructive energy extraction and associated infrastructure: fracking, tar sands, offshore drilling, oil trains, mountaintop removal, natural gas pipelines, and uranium mines
- halting any investment in fossil fuel infrastructure, including natural gas, and phase out all fossil fuel power plants
- phasing out nuclear power and end nuclear subsidies
- adopting energy efficiency standards that reduce energy demand economy-wide by 50% over the next 20–30 years, as the U.S. needs no additional power, rather it can make massive reductions in its energy use through a combination of conservation and efficiency measures

Sustainable Development

The party states that:

- a waste-free society is essential to public health and the integrity and sustainability of the biosphere
- natural ecosystems are self-sustaining and generate no waste. We humans are a part of these ecosystems, and while we obtain resources from them, we

have a responsibility to return only those things that can be re-absorbed without detriment
- waste is not an inevitable part of production and consumption, as it is viewed in the current economic model

The party advocates:

- shifting the nation toward clean production and principles of zero waste
- phasing out all avoidable production and sale of toxic metals, persistent organic pollutants, persistent bio-accumulative toxins, synthetic petrochemicals, and halogenated chemicals, and replacing them with non-toxic alternatives
- making manufacturers responsible for the full life cycle of their products by requiring them to take back used products and packaging for remanufacturing, reuse, or recycling
- support for and implementation of the principle: "When an activity threatens harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically; placing the burden of proof on the proponent of the activity, rather than the public
- strengthen right-to-know laws so that everyone can discover what toxic or potentially toxic chemicals are used and released in their communities, and in products that they might purchase or use
- strict liability for the consequences of the pollution produced by corporations
- ending the use of incineration as a cleanup technology, and ensuring that "cleanups" don't simply relocate toxins to chemical waste dumps in poor communities of color
- shut down existing waste incinerators, imposing a moratorium on new waste incinerators, and phasing out landfills
- prohibition of shipping of toxic, hazardous, or radioactive wastes across national borders, and the shipment of such wastes without strict regulation across any political borders
- safe, secure, above ground storage for existing nuclear waste
- closure, clean up, and remediation of national labs devoted to nuclear energy and weapons development and operations
- independent, transparent radiation monitoring at all nuclear facilities
- replacement of chemical safety testing on animals with alternatives that do not use animals, wherever such alternative tests or testing strategies are available



LIBERTARIAN PARTY

Environment

The party states that:

- competitive free markets and property rights stimulate the technological innovations and behavioral changes required to protect our environment and ecosystems. Private landowners and conservation groups have a vested interest in maintaining natural resources
- governments are unaccountable for damage done to our environment and have a terrible track record when it comes to environmental protection
- protecting the environment requires a clear definition and enforcement of individual rights and responsibilities regarding resources like land, water, air, and wildlife. Where damages can be proven and quantified in a court of law, restitution to the injured parties must be required

Energy and Resources

The party states that:

- while energy is needed to fuel a modern society, government should not be subsidizing any particular form of energy. It opposes all government control of energy pricing, allocation, and production



REPUBLICAN PARTY

Climate change

The party states that:

- it is the party of America's growers, producers, farmers, ranchers, foresters, miners, commercial fishermen, and others who bring from the earth the crops, minerals, energy, and the bounties of our seas that are the lifeblood of our economy
- the labor and ingenuity of such people, and love of the land, powers our economy, creates millions of jobs, and feeds billions of people around the world
- it believes that climate change is far from the nation's most pressing security problem

The party:

- opposes any carbon tax
- advocates making all environmental decisions solely on the basis of dispassionate analysis of hard data
- advocates evaluating the recommendations of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as recommendations of a political mechanism, not an unbiased scientific institution
- rejects the agendas of both the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, which represent only the personal commitments of their signatories as they are not ratified by the Senate
- demands an immediate halt to funding for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, based on the 1994 Foreign Relations Authorization Act prohibiting funding any UN organization which grants membership to Palestinians as a state

Energy & Resources

The party affirms its belief that the people, not the government, are the best stewards of the country's natural resources, and its belief that energy producers are in the best position to develop clean energy.

The party advocates:

- opening of public land and the outer continental shelf to exploration and responsible production
- giving state regulators authority to manage energy resources on federally controlled public lands, hydraulic fracturing, methane emissions, and horizontal drilling
- promotion of cost-effective development of renewable energy resources, including wind, solar, biomass, biofuel, geothermal, and tidal energy by private capital.
- repealing and dismantling the Clean Energy Plan
- licensing of additional nuclear power plants
- completing the Keystone pipeline
- mining on public lands, for production of minerals including rare earth and other hard rock minerals critical to advance technology

Conservation & Sustainable Development

The party states that:

- the nation and its people have a moral obligation to be good stewards of the God-given natural beauty and resources of our country
- it believes that people are the most valuable resources and that human health and safety are the proper measurements of a policy's success
- private ownership has been the best guarantee of conscientious stewardship.

The party advocates:

- repealing and turning away from measures implemented by environmental extremists and complicit government officials, including restoring the original meaning of the Clean Water Act.
- transfer of 640 million acres of federal public lands to states

Species, Diversity & Wildlife

The party acknowledges the need to protect certain species threatened worldwide with extinction. However, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) should not include species such as gray wolves and other species if these species exist elsewhere in healthy numbers in another state or country

The party advocates:

- ensuring that protection for endangered species is done effectively, reasonably, and without unnecessarily impeding the development of lands and natural resources
- advocates repealing and turning away from measures implemented by environmental extremists and complicit government officials, including restoring the original meaning of the Clean Water Act

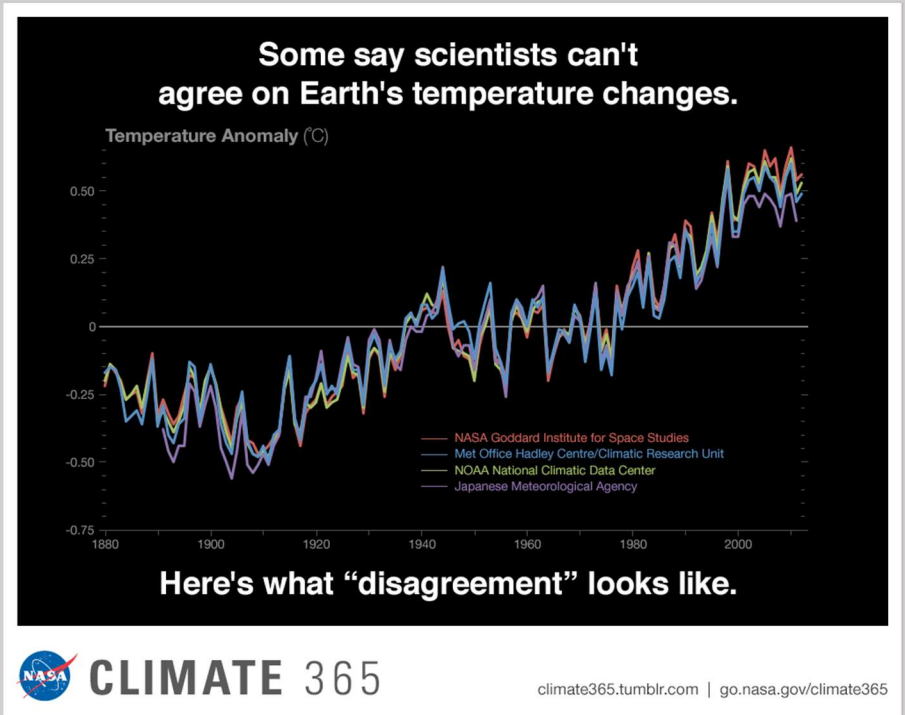
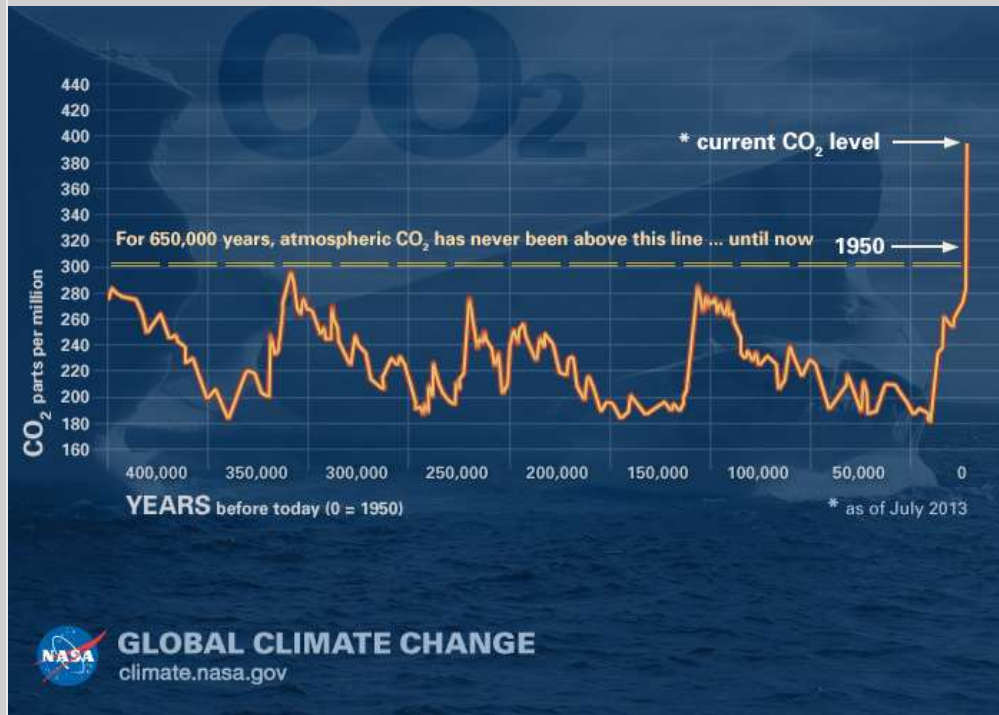
Points to Ponder: Stewardship of Creation

Consider discussing the following questions with your local candidates, elected officials, and the parties, and with your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and fellow parishioners:

Some candidates and parties have expressed doubt that human activities are adversely affecting the climate. Many authorities, scientific and academic, including the Vatican, have disagreed, suggesting that there is broad and

relatively close agreement among qualified environmental scientists that human are having an effect, and that in order to avoid catastrophic global heating, with resulting unpredictable increases in the number and severity of extreme weather events, loss of agricultural land, particularly in the poorest countries, and collapse of ecosystems, global average temperature increase must be limited to 1.5 degrees Centigrade; and that to achieve such a limit, emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide must be cut in half by 2030 and brought to zero net increase by 2050.

The US National Space and Aeronautics Administration has recently published the following charts. Does they suggest that that broad consensus does exist?



- What can or should federal, state, and local governments, non-governmental organizations, families, and individuals do, if anything, to help prevent irreversible and possibly catastrophic damage to the earth’s atmosphere?
- How can or should state governments help guide the United States toward a sustainable, adaptable, and resilient economy and life style, in order to protect future generations and those who live in other parts of the world, while enabling Americans to work at materially-sustaining and spiritually-fulfilling jobs?
- Should the elimination of single-use plastics, packaging, and implements be made a social priority? If so, what can or should the federal or state governments do, or local or charitable organizations? What other issues should be at the top of our climate agenda?

Family, Community & the Common Good

Role of the Family | Health Care & Elder Care | Education & Young Workers | Culture, Arts & Tourism

Catholic Teaching

The demands of the common good... are strictly connected to respect for and the integral promotion of the person and his fundamental rights. These demands concern above all the commitment to peace, the organization of the State's powers, a sound juridical system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: **food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation...** -166, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

The "common good" means the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily... These demands concern above all the commitment to peace, the organization of the State's powers, a sound juridical system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom. Nor must one forget the contribution that every nation is required in duty to make towards a true worldwide cooperation for the common good of the whole of humanity and for future generations also. -164-166, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

The common good consists of three essential elements: respect for and promotion of the fundamental rights of the person; prosperity, or the development of the spiritual and temporal goods of society; the peace and security of the group and of its members. -1925, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

The Role & Development of the Family

"Honour your father and mother."
– the 4th Commandment

The family is the primary unit in society. It is where education begins and the Word of God is first nurtured. **The priority of the family over society and the State must be affirmed.** – 209-214, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

The Church teaches that the proper role of government and other human institutions is **to foster human life and dignity by maintaining social conditions that enable and encourage us to serve God in one another,** and thereby to promote that which is truly in the common interest. This begins with nurturing and enabling families, as well as supporting the elderly and other marginalized members of society.

Health Care



DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Role and development of the family

The party has published no official statement concerning its position on the role of the family.

Child Care

The party states that it believes in universal early childhood education and affordable, high-quality child care

The party advocates:

- implementing paid sick days and comprehensive paid family and medical leave for all workers
- major investment in quality, affordable child care, increase Child & Dependent tax credit
- increasing funding for federal food assistance programs, to alleviate child hunger

Health Care

The party believes that health care is a human right, and undertakes to continue to seek universal health care, reduced premiums and prescription prices, with control of overall costs and elimination of systemic discrimination.

COVID Pandemic

The party advocates:

- free COVID testing for everyone
- free vaccines for everyone when ready, including non-residents
- expanded funding for state and local hiring of staff for contract tracing
- federal payment of 100% of COBRA costs for those at risk of job loss
- reopening of Affordable Care Act markets and coverage levels
- prohibiting disabilities-related care for COVID patients with disabilities
- early preparation for future pandemics

General Health Care

The party advocates:

- increased funding for research into how the social determinants of health contribute to differences in health outcomes
- a sustained, government-wide effort to eliminate racial, social, ethnic, gender and geographic gaps in insurance rates, access to quality care, and health outcomes
- expanding Medicaid to enroll low-income people in a high-quality public option without premiums, and to include dental, vision, and hearing coverage
- strengthening of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, Medicaid, and VA systems
- ensuring that health care is available to all at no more than 8.5% of their income
- doubled investments in community and rural health centers, and expanded mobile health units
- investing to build capacity of Medicaid to eliminate waiting lists for home and community-based care
- elimination of requirement for patients to hold low-paying jobs in order to qualify for Medicaid
- in order to save mothers' lives, expanding postpartum Medicaid coverage to one year after birth, promote maternal health in rural areas and increase diversity of perinatal workforce, implement bias training for health professionals
- increasing medical price transparency, reducing paperwork, implementing uniform billing practices
- pursuing anti-trust action to stop health care mega-mergers
- providing direct, increased supports to states for adult Medicaid enrollment and increase federal percentage of bill coverage
- increased funding for CDC and state and local health departments
- creating a tax credit for unpaid informal and family caregivers
- improving standards for nursing homes and staff
- continued commitment to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic
- a minimum wage of \$15/hr for health care workers whose employment is funded by taxpayer dollars

Among the causes that greatly contribute to underdevelopment and poverty, mention must be made of illiteracy, lack of food security, the absence of structures and services, inadequate measures for guaranteeing basic healthcare, and the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation. - 166, 447 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Some people are born into economically stable families, receive a fine education, grow up well nourished, or naturally possess great talent. They will certainly not need a proactive state; they need only claim their freedom. Yet the same rule clearly does not apply to a disabled person, to someone born in dire poverty, to those lacking a good education and with little access to adequate health care. **If a society is governed primarily by the criteria of market freedom and efficiency, there is no place for such persons, and fraternity will remain just another vague ideal.** Pope Francis – *Fratelli tutti*, 109

Support for the Elderly

If the elderly are in situations where they experience suffering and dependence, not only do they need health care services and appropriate assistance, but and **above all they need to be treated with love.** - 222 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Education

“May Nazareth remind us what the family is, what the communion of love is, its stark and simple beauty, its sacred and inviolable character; may it help us to see **how sweet and irreplaceable education in the family is;** may it teach us its natural function in the social order. May we finally learn the lesson of work.” – 210 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, citing St Paul VI, Address at Nazareth (5 January 1964)*

Maintaining employment depends more and more on one’s professional capabilities. Instructional and educational systems must not neglect human or technological formation, which are necessary for gainfully fulfilling one’s responsibilities.

Young people should be taught to act upon their own initiative, to accept the responsibility of facing with adequate competencies the risks connected with a fluid economic context that is often unpredictable in the way it evolves. – 289, 290 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Culture, Arts & Tourism

Faced with rapid technological and economic progress, and with the equally rapid transformation of the processes of production and consumption, **a great deal of educational and cultural work is urgently needed.** *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 376, 401*

Certain economically prosperous countries tend to be proposed as cultural models for less developed countries; instead,

Support for the Elderly

The party advocates:

- reforming social security by increasing benefits for all and protecting surviving spouses
- rejecting efforts to privatize or weaken social security, including raising retirement age or cuts to cost-of-living increases
- addressing social security rights for unpaid caregivers

Education & Young Workers

The party believes that education is a critical public good—not a commodity—and that it is the government’s responsibility to ensure that every child, everywhere, is able to receive a world-class education that enables them to lead meaningful lives.

The party advocates:

- improving early childhood education
- increased funding to states to guarantee that low- and middle-income families can afford child care
- increased professional requirements for and training of early childhood educators

K-12

The party advocates:

- to reduce inequitable funding of public schools, tripling of Title 1 funding for low-income students
- expansion of free lunch programs, health care and nutrition service
- expansion of adult education classes
- expanded vocational and arts magnet schools
- banning federal funding for for-profit private schools
- ending private school vouchers
- working to end violence in schools
- reform of school and student performance testing

Higher Education

The party believes that everyone should be able to earn a degree beyond high school, without money standing in the way.

The party advocates:

- tuition-free public colleges and universities for family earning less than \$125,000 (about 80% of Americans)
- tuition free community colleges and trade schools for all students, including Dreamers
- increased federal support for on-campus child care
- mobilizing a diverse new generation of young workers through a corps and cohort challenged to conserve our public lands
- as a part of the COVID recovery process, forgiving up to \$10,000 per student on federal student loans, forgiveness of interest and debt for others, without tax consequences

Culture, Arts & Tourism

The party believes that the arts are essential to our free and democratic society.

The party advocates:

- support for non-profit cultural organizations, artists, scholars, and state and local support for participation in the arts.

GREEN PARTY

Role of the Family

The party advocates:

- social policies focused on protecting families
- programs that ensure that children, as vulnerable members of society, receive basic nutritional, educational, and medical necessities

each of those countries should be helped to grow in its own distinct way and to develop its capacity for innovation while respecting the values of its proper culture. **A shallow and pathetic desire to imitate others leads to copying and consuming in place of creating, and fosters low national self-esteem.**

We forget that “there is no worse form of alienation than to feel uprooted, belonging to no one. **A land will be fruitful, and its people bear fruit and give birth to the future, only to the extent that it can foster a sense of belonging among its members, create bonds of integration between generations and different communities,** and avoid all that makes us insensitive to others and leads to further alienation.” – *Fratelli tutti*, –51-53

- support for and expansion of Head Start and Pre- and neo-natal programs
- a universal, federally funded childcare program for pre-school and young schoolchildren
- family assistance such as the earned income tax credit, for working poor families in which the parent supports and lives with the children, to offset regressive payroll taxes and growing inequalities in American society
- no privatization of social security, so that the program remains under the aegis of the Federal Government, attempts to expand its effectiveness
- work of non-profit public interest groups and those individuals breaking out of "careerism" to pursue non-traditional careers in public service.

Health Care & Elder Care

The party states that:

- it supports single-payer universal health care and preventive care for all, and believes that health care is a right, not a privilege
- the United States is the only industrialized nation in the world without a national health care system
- under a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health care system, the administrative waste of private insurance corporations would be redirected to patient care, and would be more than enough to offset the cost of additional care. Expenses for businesses currently providing coverage would be reduced, while state and local governments would pay less because they would receive reimbursement for services provided to the previously uninsured
- it supports a wide range of health care services, including conventional medicine, as well as the teaching, funding and practice of complementary, integrative and licensed alternative health care approaches
- to improve national health, we must improve the quality of our air, water and food and the health of our workplaces, homes and schools
- it unequivocally supports a woman's right to reproductive choice, no matter her marital status or age, and that contraception and safe, legal abortion procedures be available on demand and be included in all health insurance coverage in the U.S., as well as free of charge in any state where a woman's income falls below the poverty level
- the failure of governments to invest in research for a cure for HIV/AIDS is because mainstream society has the belief that contracting HIV is self-inflicted by "sinful" or "illegal" behavior
- the largest groups with HIV/AIDS in the USA are men who have sex with men, including gay, bisexual, and trans men, and men of color, particularly of African and Latinx descent. Persons who share needles are the next largest group of persons with HIV/AIDS in the USA

The party advocates:

- a publicly funded health care insurance program, administered at the state and local levels, with comprehensive lifetime benefits, including dental, vision, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, medication coverage, and hospice and long-term care
- participation of all licensed and/or certified health providers, subject to standards of practice in their field, with the freedom of patients to choose the type of health care provider from a wide range of health care choices, and with decision-making in the hands of patients and their health providers
- portability of coverage regardless of geographical location or employment
- cost controls via streamlined administration, national fee schedules, bulk purchases of drugs and medical equipment, coordination of capital expenditures and publicly negotiated prices of medications
- primary and preventive care as priorities, including wellness education about diet, nutrition and exercise; holistic health; and medical marijuana
- more comprehensive services for those who have special needs, including the mentally ill, the differently abled and those who are terminally ill
- hospitals that can afford safe and adequate staffing levels of registered nurses
- establishment of national, state, and local health policy boards consisting of health consumers and providers to oversee and evaluate the performance of the system, ensure access to care, and help determine research priorities
- comprehensive, humane, and competent care of all people with HIV/AIDS
- increased public education in the prevention of transmission of HIV/AIDS which includes funding for the purchase and distribution of condoms, gloves, dams, and needles & syringes
- increased funding for age appropriate comprehensive sex education that includes use of barriers for prevention of fluid/blood transmission
- easy access for students to condoms, gloves, and dams in schools
- funding for methods of peer education for sex workers and those who may share needles, and to supply them with condoms, dams, gloves, and needles & syringes
- educating incarcerated individuals in HIV transmission prevention and supplying them with condoms, dams, and gloves
- creation of daily HIV medication distribution centers for individuals who are unable to manage the complex daily medication regimen without assistance
- free, anonymous testing of people for the presence of HIV/AIDS; and elimination of mandated testing
- best governmental efforts to negotiate fair and reasonable prices for associated drugs, rather than allowing manufacturers to extract excessive profits from these life-saving medications
- funding for outreach and treatment to address the particular circumstances and specific needs of the various communities affected by HIV/AIDS
- better condoms
- research for HIV/AIDS vaccine research as well as research on prevention methods such as microbicides

- provision to people of means and support to protect themselves from all sexually transmitted and blood & body fluid borne diseases
- repeal of all HIV criminalization laws and policies and release all prisoners imprisoned solely due to HIV status

Education & Young Workers

K-12 Education

The party states that:

- a great challenge facing the people of the United States is to educate ourselves to build a just, sustainable, humane and democratic future, and to become responsible and effective citizens of the local and global communities we share
- every child deserves a public education that fosters critical and holistic thought, and provides the breadth and depth of learning necessary to become an active citizen and a constructive member of our society
- our public school system, as it presently operates, helps us reach that goal
- for the first time in this country's history, students of color represent the majority of the PK-12 public education student body
- additionally, now more than half of all school children are classified as "low income"
- nearly 35 percent of all public school students have some specific learning disability and are receiving special education services
- in view of the foregoing, in order for America's schools to truly become effective in teaching our students to think critically and to respond to life challenges, districts, schools and teachers must develop a new consciousness toward students that includes cultural competency, the understanding of the impact of poverty on school performance, asset-based engagement and how to create stable, nurturing school environments that will help students thrive and succeed
- opposing the dissolution of public schools and the privatization of education
- the best educational experience is guaranteed by the democratic empowerment of organized students, their parents and communities along with organized teachers
- students should be challenged with great works of literature, economics, philosophy, history, music, and the arts as regular academic subjects
- we must end disinvestment in education and instead put it at the top of our social and economic agenda. Effective schools have sufficient resources. Too many of our teachers are overworked, underpaid, and starved of key materials.
- it does not believe that schools should turn our children into servile students, employees, consumers or citizens

The party advocates:

- equal access to high-quality education, and sharp increases in financial aid for college students
- dismantling white supremacy in our schools, represented in curricula, discipline, teacher recruitment and more, by seeking to end the school-to-jailhouse track
- freeing teachers from requirements to use exclusively Common Core Standards-aligned materials, which neglect the contributions and struggles of people of color
- allowing teachers to choose whichever materials are academically-challenging and culturally appropriate for their students, and strengthening cultural competency requirements for teachers
- providing robust professional development in cultural competency, and widen the scope of teacher preparation to include cultural competency training
- ending alternative teacher licensing initiatives such as Teach for America which recruit primarily white teachers and inject them into urban classrooms with as little as five weeks' training and only a two-year commitment, creating great destabilization in school communities that need consistent leadership and community connections
- incentivize "grow your own teacher" programs in oppressed communities with targeted recruitment during high school, federal grants and loan forgiveness and mentoring
- invest more resources into recruiting fully bilingual school support staff, such as front-office and family resource personnel and counselors
- eliminating police officers from our schools, and ensuring that school security personnel are trained for, and held accountable to, conflict resolution techniques and anti-bias training
- ensuring that security personnel demonstrate cultural competency and refrain from enforcing white supremacist oppressive tactics
- recognize the impact of poverty on student achievement, which no amount of sanctions, standards, turnarounds, teacher targeting or privatization will fix
- ending inequitable school funding and use of schemes like "student-based budgeting," behavior policies based on "no excuses," "character education" and "grit," and school closures
- ending regimes of high-stakes standardized testing and the wholesale diversion of resources away from public schools are provoking crises for which the bipartisan corporate consensus recommends school closings, dissolution of entire school districts and replacement by unaccountable, profit-based charter schools
- recognizing and upholding parents' right to opt their children out of any standardized test, and ending official bullying and threats from school and district officials when parents opt out
- ending all federal competitive grants like Race to the Top (RTTT) and instead equitably fund schools based on a priority of socioeconomic level

- elimination of gross inequalities in school funding, and focusing federal education policy on providing equal access to a quality education

K-12 Curriculum

The party states that:

- values start with parents and schools should not seek to de-program students from those values

The party advocates:

- providing age-appropriate education on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and safer sex
- prohibiting commercial advertising to children in schools
- providing healthy school meals that are rich in vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber, and offer plant-based vegetarian options and providing opportunities for parents to assist in meal preparation. m. Ban the sale of soda pop and junk food in schools
- including a vigorous and engrossing civics curriculum in later elementary and secondary schools, to teach students to be active citizens
- encouraging parental responsibility by supporting parenting in culturally-sensitive ways and increasing opportunities for parents to be as involved as possible in their children's education
- recognizing the viable alternative of home-based education and support working-class parents who wish to offer it to their children
- opposing efforts to restrict the teaching of scientific information and the portrayal of religious belief as fact
- decreasing the student-teacher ratio in classrooms and increase the number of counselors, nurses, librarians and social workers
- including self-defense skills in the physical education curriculum at elementary school level
- providing researched-based drug, tobacco, and alcohol abuse prevention, as well as evidence-based information about the true effect of recreational or medicinal substances such as cannabis on the developing brain
- teaching all students about white supremacy and intersectionality
- ending the militarization of our schools. JROTC programs are an expensive drain on our limited educational resources and a diversion from their important mission to prepare our young to assume their role in a peaceful tomorrow
- ending the use of ASVAB testing to mine public school student bodies for data to support military recruiting
- forbidding military access to student records

Post-secondary education

The party advocates:

- providing free college tuition to all qualified students at public universities and vocational schools
- abolishing all student and parent loans taken out to finance post-secondary and vocational education
- opposing military and corporate control over the priorities and topics of university academic research
- expanded opportunities for universal higher education and life-long learning

Young People

The party states that:

- all human beings have the right to a life that will let them achieve their full potential
- young people are one of the least protected classes of human beings, yet they represent our future. We must ensure they have an upbringing that allows them to take their place as functioning, productive, and self-actualized members of their community
- youth are not the property of their parents or guardians, but are under their care and guidance
- youth have the right to survive by being provided adequate food, shelter and comprehensive health care, including prenatal care for mothers
- youth have the right to be protected from abuse, harmful drugs, violence, environmental hazards, neglect, and exploitation
- youth have the right to develop in a safe and nurturing early environment provided by affordable childcare and pre-school preparation
- youth have the right to an education that is stimulating, relevant, engaging, and that fosters their natural desire to learn
- young people's creative potential should be encouraged to the greatest extent possible
- young people should have input into the direction and pace of their own education, including input into the operation of their educational institutions
- young people should be provided with education regarding their own and others' sexuality at the earliest appropriate time
- young people should be provided the opportunity to express themselves in their own media, including television, radio, films and the Internet
- young people should also be given skills in analyzing commercial media
- young people should be kept free from coercive advertising at their educational institutions.

The party advocates:

- to create new opportunities for citizens to serve their communities through non-military community service and challenge young people while encouraging social responsibility by providing them with land and resource management skills, formation of a Civilian Conservation Corps, with national leadership and state

and local affiliates, to spearhead efforts to work on the tasks of environmental education, restoration of damaged habitats, reforestation, and cleaning up polluted waterways

Culture, Arts & Tourism

The party states that:

- freedom of artistic expression is a fundamental right and a key element in empowering communities, and in moving us toward sustainability and respect for diversity
- artists can create in ways that foster healthy, non-alienating relationships between people and their daily environments, communities, and the Earth. This can include both artists whose themes advocate compassion, nurturance, or cooperation; and artists whose creations unmask the often-obscure connections between various forms of violence, domination, and oppression, or effectively criticize aspects of the very community that supports their artistic activity
- the arts can only perform their social function if they are completely free from outside control

The party advocates:

- alternative, community-based systems treating neither the artwork nor the artist as a commodity
- elimination of all laws that seek to restrict or censor artistic expression, including the withholding of government funds for political or moral content
- increased funding for the arts appropriate to their essential social role at local, state and federal levels of government
- community-funded programs employing local artists to enrich their communities through public art programs, including public performances, exhibitions, murals on public buildings, design or re-design of parks and public areas, storytelling and poetry reading, and publication
- the establishment of non-profit public forums for local artists to display their talents and creations
- research, public dialogue, and trial experiments to develop alternative systems for the valuation and exchange of artworks and for the financial support of artists
- funding sources not connected with social injustice or environmental destruction
- education programs in the community that will energize the creativity of every community member from the youngest to the oldest, including neglected groups such as teenagers, senior citizens, prisoners, immigrants, and drug addicts. Such programs would provide materials and access to interested, qualified arts educators for every member of the community who demonstrates an interest
- funding and staffing to incorporate arts education into every school curriculum
- integration of the arts and artistic teaching methods into other areas of the curriculum to promote a holistic perspective



LIBERTARIAN PARTY

Role and development of the family

The party states that:

- parents, or other guardians, have the right to raise their children according to their own standards and beliefs, provided that the rights of children to be free from abuse and neglect are also protected

Education

The party states that:

- education is best provided by the free market, achieving greater quality, accountability, and efficiency with more diversity of choice
- recognizing that the education of children is a parental responsibility, it would restore authority to parents to determine the education of their children, without interference from government
- parents should have control of and responsibility for all funds expended for their children's education

Health Care

The party states that:

- it favors a free market health care system. It recognizes the freedom of individuals to determine the level of health insurance they want (if any), the level of health care they want, the care providers they want, the medicines and treatments they will use and all other aspects of their medical care, including end-of-life decisions
- people should be free to purchase health insurance across state lines.



REPUBLICAN PARTY

Role and development of the family

The party believes that the family is the foundation of civil society, and that the cornerstone of the family is natural marriage, the union of one man and one woman. Its daily lessons - cooperation, patience, mutual respect, responsibility, self-reliance - are fundamental to the order and progress of our Republic.

The party:

- condemns Supreme Court rulings that overturned the millennias-old foundation of marriage and family as the union of one man and one woman.
- opposes government discrimination against entities that decline to sell items or services to individuals for activities that go against their religious views
- supports measures to ensure that private adoption agencies are not discriminated against based on their views on family and marriage
- advocates repeal of tax code and public assistance policies which penalize marriage and families

Health Care

COVID Pandemic

The party has published no official statement concerning its position on pandemic recovery.

General Health Care

The party advocates:

- repealing the Affordable Care Act of 2010, and returning to privatized health care services
- returning control of health care insurance programs to the states
- capping malpractice liability for non-economic damages

Medicare

The party advocates:

- modernizing Medicare and making it more cost efficient by giving participants younger than 55 the option of traditional Medicare or a premium-support model with stronger patient choices, promoting competition among providers
- guaranteeing to enroll each Medicare participant with an income-adjusted contribution toward a plan of their choice
- for new enrollees, setting a more realistic age for eligibility, in view of today's longer life span

Medicaid

The party advocates:

- premium supports for purchasing insurance, refundable tax credits, alternatives to hospitalization for chronic patients, disease prevention activities, and other innovations
- use of block grants to allow states to experiment with different models, in order to improve strategies that can be shared with other states
- respect for states' authority to exclude abortion from Medicaid and other health care programs

Support for the Elderly

The party advocates:

- priority in public policy for promoting home care programs to allow the elderly to age at home
- programs to protect against elder abuse

Education & Young Workers

The party believes that education is much more than schooling. It is the whole range of activities by which families and communities transmit to a younger generation, not just knowledge and skills, but ethical and behavioral norms and traditions. It is the handing over of a cultural identity.

The party advocates:

- curtailing the influence of centralizing forces from outside the family and community
- parental control over educational choices for children, including a constitutional amendment to stop interference by governments at any level

- allowing federal Title I funding for low-income or special-needs students to follow children to any schools the parents choose
- choice for parents in the educational philosophies and content, including home-schooling, career and vocational training, online learnings and early-college high schools
- protections for teachers from frivolous lawsuits, and reasonable authority for teachers to discipline children
- encouragement of state legislatures to offer Bible as an elective literature curriculum in high schools
- greater accountability among educators, and for the Department of Education, to establish that expenditures are linked to improved educational performance
- promotion of technology as a key element in education.
- promotion of history and civics, based on the original documents of the founding fathers.
- replacing federal funding of student loans with private funding
- decoupling of accreditation and federal funding, to allow a greater variety in higher education

Culture, Arts & Tourism

The party believes that American culture and free enterprise should be brought to all parts of the world.

Points to Ponder: Family, Community & the Common Good

Consider discussing the following questions with your local candidates, elected officials, and the parties, and with your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and fellow parishioners:

Families & Child Well-Being

- When, if ever, is it appropriate for governments to place limits on the right of parents to make decisions pertaining to the care or education of their children?
- To what extent is child poverty a problem in the United States? To the extent that it is a problem, what, should be done about it, and by whom? By federal or state governments, by individuals, or by private, non-profit, or community organizations, including the Church and lay Catholic organizations?
- Some political parties have suggested that full participation by all eligible work force members, including both parents of two-parent couples and single parents, is critical in order to maximize return from the national economy, so that economic well-being can be optimized, and that in order to maximize those returns and ensure full economic participation, it is critical to ensure that affordable child care is accessible by all families. Which is more important for children, a stable and dignified home with two loving parents, or maximized national economic returns?

Health Care

- What can or should be done, by federal or state governments or by private, non-profit, or community organizations, including the Church and lay Catholic organizations, to ensure that quality health care is available in timely, humane, and cost-efficient manner to all who need it?
- With respect to Medicaid and other forms of publicly-supported health care, does there exist any obligation for an individual to take reasonable measures to avoid health issues (e.g., wearing a mask in a pandemic, when recommended by public health authorities), so as to avoid becoming a publicly-funded health care burden when preventable illness or injury occurs? If so, what can or should be done to encourage such measures?

Care for the Elderly

- Some parties are calling for increased space in publicly-funded facilities for the elderly and long-term care patients. Should any other solutions, such as nurturing a culture of life-long intergenerational family cohesiveness and support, including home caregivers, be considered also, in addition to or as alternatives to long-term residential care?
- Who should be responsible for long-term support for the elderly? Themselves? Their families? The federal or state governments? Charitable institutions? Some combination of these? To what extent?

Education

- It has been suggested that too many Americans fail to understand democratic principles, such as the responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments, and the proper roles of non-governmental institutions such as charities, schools, businesses, news media, and moral and religious organizations. What, if anything, can or should the federal government do in order to promote a more comprehensive understanding of civics in the United States?

Catholic Teaching

The Dignity & Importance of Work

The use of one's gifts to seek and serve God **necessarily includes work**, by which humans cooperate with God in God's continuing act of creation. **Work has a place of honour because it is a source of the conditions for a decent life**, and is, in principle, an effective instrument against poverty. **But one must not succumb to the temptation of making an idol of work**, for the ultimate and definitive meaning of life is not to be found in work. Work is essential, but it is God — and not work — who is the origin of life and the final goal of man.

The underlying principle of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. The demand of justice, which stems from it, precedes concerns for profit: **"Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble with it"** (Prov. 15:16). **"Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice"** (Prov. 16:8). — 257, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

Work is not only an essential part of life, but **when we work in accordance with our inner passions — our individual vocations — it is a joy. And it is also an obligation to one's family, neighbors, and nation.** Man must work, both because the Creator has commanded it and in order to respond to the need to maintain and develop his own humanity. We are heirs of the work of generations and at the same time shapers of the future of all who will live after us. — 274, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

But work, and particularly dignified work, **is not readily available** for all who seek it. **Those who are unemployed or underemployed suffer the profound negative consequences** that such a situation creates in a personality and they run the risk of being marginalized within society, of becoming victims of social exclusion... —289, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Poverty Reduction

The poor, the marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be **the focus of particular concern.** To this end, the preferential option for the poor should be reaffirmed in all its force... Today, this **love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us**, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without health care and, above all, those without hope of a better future." — 182, *Compendium of*



DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The Dignity of Work

The party has released no official statement concerning its policies on the dignity of work.

Poverty Reduction

The party remains committed to ending poverty and enabling all Americans to live up to their God-given potential.

The party advocates:

- 10-20-30 funding, to provide 10% of federal funding to communities in which at least 20% of population has lived beneath the poverty line for 30 years or more
- increasing funding for federal food assistance programs, to alleviate child hunger
- boosting funding for economic development in impoverished communities through grants, investment, and tax credits
- insuring access to low-cost, language accessible banking to low and middle income families programs, to alleviate child hunger
- improving economic mobility for people of color
- limiting gentrification of neighborhoods
- ending housing discrimination by equalizing access to credit and expanding first-time homebuyer's support
- strengthening the Community Reinvestment Act to invest in low-income communities
- using federal procurement to incentivize private companies to recruit and advance people of color

Living wage

The party advocates:

- raising wages for working people and improving job quality and security, including by raising the federal minimum wage so it reaches \$15 an hour by 2026
- guaranteed equal pay for women
- reforming social security by increasing benefits for all, protecting surviving spouses
- rejecting efforts to privatize or weaken social security, including raising retirement age or cuts to cost-of-living increases
- addressing social security rights for unpaid caregivers

Job training

The party advocates:

- increased investment in adult literacy and other skills development programs
- investment in career and technical education, including apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship programs

Jobs, Unions, Employment, Industries & Corporations

Jobs, Unions, Employment

The party advocates:

- investment in clean energy, clean transportation, energy efficiency, and advanced manufacturing
- repeal of right-to-work legislation, to strengthen unions
- eliminating systematic racism and discrimination in employment by strengthening and increasing funding for the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission
- putting American workers first in trade negotiations
- implementing paid sick days and comprehensive paid family and medical leave for all workers
- major investment in quality, affordable child care, increase Child & Dependent tax credit
- increased wages for caregivers in all settings

Small businesses, trades & crafts

The party advocates:

- providing technical and manufacturing expertise to small domestic manufacturers

the Social Doctrine of the Church

Catholics are called to remember Jesus' own words: **What we do to the least among us, we do to Him.** – *Matthew 25:31-46*

“Helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. **The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work**”. – Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, 128

An Economy to Serve People

I encourage financial experts and political leaders to ponder the words of one of the sages of antiquity: 'Not to share one's wealth with the poor is to steal from them and to take away their livelihood. It is not our own goods which we hold, but theirs...'

Money must serve, not rule! –Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospel*, 57-58

The development of economic activity and growth in production are **meant to provide for the needs of human beings. Economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power**; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community. For many people, a living wage and dignified housing are beyond reach. – 2426, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

The planning capacity of a society oriented towards the common good and looking to the future **is measured... above all on the basis of the employment prospects that it is able to offer. Maintaining employment depends more and more on one's professional capabilities.** Instructional and educational systems must not neglect human or technological formation, which are necessary for gainfully fulfilling one's responsibilities.

Young people should be taught to act upon their own initiative, to accept the responsibility of facing with adequate competencies the risks connected with a fluid economic context that is often unpredictable in the way it evolves. –271-290, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

Small businesses, trades, and crafts

The **decentralization of production**, which assigns to smaller companies several tasks previously undertaken by larger production interests, **gives vitality and new energy** to the area of small and medium-sized businesses. In this way, alongside traditional artisans there emerge new businesses characterized by small production interests at work in modern production sectors or in decentralized activities of larger companies.

Work in small and medium-sized businesses, the work of

- increased grants and loans to small businesses, including those owned by women and people of color
- investment in career and technical education, including apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship programs.

Technology & innovation

The party advocates:

- historic investment research, development, and deployment to create jobs in aerospace, computers, advance materials, biotech, and clean technologies
- increased support for innovators and women of color in technology
- commitment to NASA and expansion of space exploration and discovery, including the International Space Station and a return to the moon
- increased and sustainable funding for health and medical research and federal grants across agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the CDC, and the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality, and reduction of silos to accelerate cancer research

Unions and workers' rights

The party advocates:

- repealing right-to-work legislation to strengthen unions
- strengthening whistleblower and anti-retaliation legislation to protect workers
- personal accountability for executives who interfere with worker organization
- increased staff and funding for the Labor Department to enforce labor laws
- passing the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act to provide better pay and benefits for public sector employees

Corporations, competition & consumers

The party advocates:

- review of recent mergers and acquisitions, with priority for pharmaceutical, health care, telecom, tech, and agriculture industries, to ensure no improper concentration, price increases, worker harm, inequality, reduced competition or innovation, etc.
- rewriting legislation to restrict non-compete clauses and mandatory arbitration for employment law disputes
- strengthening the anti-trust act, including in the agriculture industry
- updating of Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights to include national standards of protection
- enhanced privacy protection for children and students

Manufacturing, industries & agriculture

The party advocates:

- disincentivizing off-shore manufacturing, and acceleration of on-shoring of critical supply chains
- expansion of tax credits for domestic manufacturing
- investment in innovation hubs, provision of technical and expertise to small manufacturers
- robust Buy America and Buy Clean standards for federally-supported projects

Transportation & infrastructure

The party believes that transportation is a public good, and that transit jobs should be good jobs

The party advocates:

- job creation through investment in repair, modernization and expansion of transportation infrastructure, including addition of 500,000 public electric-vehicle charging stations
- use of safe modern designs to allow cars, pedestrians, cyclists and others to share roads
- investment in high-speed rail and renovation of Amtrak
- requiring that US-made cargo be carried on US-flagged ships
- creation of a public infrastructure bank to leverage public and private resources for projects of national or regional significance
- union protections for federal infrastructure projects

 **GREEN PARTY**

An Economy to Serve People

artisans and independent work can represent an occasion to make the actual work experience more human, both in terms of the possibility of establishing positive personal relationships in smaller-sized communities and in terms of the opportunities for greater initiative and industriousness. In these sectors, however, there are more than just a few cases of unjust treatment, of poorly paid and, above all, uncertain work. – 315, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

Industries, Innovation, & Agriculture

Thanks to technological innovations, the world is being enriched with new professions **while others are disappearing**. In the present phase of transition there is a continuous movement of workers from the industrial sector to that of services... In particular, there is an increase in...part-time, temporary and “non-traditional” employment... – 313, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

Unions & Workers’ Rights

The demands of competition, technological innovation and the complexities of financial fluxes **must be brought into harmony** with the defense of workers and their rights. – 313, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

Any form of materialism or economic tenet that tries to reduce the worker to a mere instrument of production, a simple labour force with an exclusively material value, would hopelessly distort the essence of work and strip it of its most noble and basic human quality. 270-271, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Among the rights of workers, the Church recognizes:

- the right to a just wage;
- the right to rest;
- the right “to a working environment and to manufacturing processes which are not harmful to the workers’ physical health or to their moral integrity”;
- the right that one’s personality in the workplace should be safeguarded “without suffering any affront to one’s conscience or personal dignity;
- the right to appropriate subsidies that are necessary for the subsistence of unemployed workers and their families;
- the right to a pension and to insurance for old age, sickness, and in case of work-related accidents;
- the right to social security connected with maternity;
- the right to assemble and form associations.

– 301, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

The Church recognizes the fundamental role played by labour unions... Such organizations, while pursuing their specific purpose

The party states, as part of its ten key values, that:

- the accumulation of individual wealth in the U.S. has reached grossly unbalanced proportions. It is clear that we cannot rely on the rich to regulate their profit-making excesses for the good of society through "trickle-down economics." We must take aggressive steps to restore a fair distribution of income.
- it supports redesigning the nation’s work structures to encourage employee ownership and workplace democracy
- it supports development of new economic activities and institutions that allow the nation to use technology in ways that are humane, freeing, ecological, and responsive and accountable to communities
- it supports establishment of a form of basic economic security open to all
- it calls for moving beyond the narrow 'job ethic' to new definitions of 'work,' 'jobs' and 'income' in a cooperative and democratic economy
- it supports restructuring national patterns of income distribution to reflect the wealth created by those outside the formal monetary economy – those who take responsibility for parenting, housekeeping, home gardens, community volunteer work, and the like
- it supports restricting the size and concentrated power of corporations without discouraging superior efficiency or technological innovation
- all social actions and policies should be motivated by long-term goals, seeking to protect valuable natural resources and safely disposing of or 'unmaking' all waste we create, while developing a sustainable economics that does not depend on continual expansion for survival
- our economy must counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by assuring that economic development, new technologies, and fiscal policies are responsible to future generations who will inherit the results of our actions
- the quality of all lives, rather than open-ended economic growth, should be the focus of future thinking and policy

Measuring Economic Health

The party states that:

- economic growth remains a primary goal of U.S. policy, with corporations and others advocating a theory of unlimited economic growth through technological progress
- the physical and biological sciences, however, suggest that there is a limit to economic growth
- there is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and ecological health (for example, biodiversity conservation, clean air and water, atmospheric stability)
- we cannot rely on technological progress to solve ecological and long-term economic problems

The party advocates:

- promoting lifestyle choices that reinforce a general equilibrium of humans with nature, including conscious choices to foster environmentally sound technologies, whether new or old, and to discourage conspicuous consumption and waste
- pursuit of a steady-state economy, including a stable or mildly fluctuating product of population and per capita consumption and GDP
- an alternative way to measure the economy is to assess the value of non-monetary goods and services and measure the rate of infant mortality, life expectancy of people, educational opportunities offered by the state, family stability, environmental data, and health care for all people
- another measure includes quantifying human benefit (in terms of education, health care, elder care, etc.) provided by each unit of output. Measuring the gap between the most fortunate and the least fortunate in our society, for example, tells us how well or poorly we are doing in creating an economy that does not benefit some at the expense of others
- for nations with widespread poverty, increasing per capita consumption (through economic growth or through more equitable distributions of wealth)
- acknowledgment that ultimately the global ecosystem will not be able to support further economic growth
- an equitable distribution of wealth among nations, in order to maintain a global steady-state economy

Poverty Reduction

The party states that:

- it is time for a radical shift in our attitude toward support for families, children, the poor and the disabled
- such support must not be given grudgingly; it is the right of those presently in need and an investment in our future
- we should recognize that the work of their caregivers is of social and economic value, and reward it accordingly
- ensuring that children and their caregivers have access to an adequate, secure standard of living should form the cornerstone of our economic priorities. Only then can we hope to build our future on a foundation of healthy, educated children who are raised in an atmosphere of love and security
- all people have a right to food, housing, medical care, jobs that pay a living wage, education, and support in times of hardship
- work performed outside the monetary system has inherent social and economic value, and is essential to a healthy, sustainable economy and peaceful communities. Such work includes: child and elder care; homemaking; voluntary community service; continuing education; participating in government; and the arts
- we must take an uncompromising position that the care and nurture of children, elders and the disabled are essential to a healthy, peaceful, and sustainable society

with regard to the common good, are a **positive influence for social order and solidarity**, and are therefore an indispensable element of social life. Work, because of its subjective or personal character, is superior to every other factor connected with productivity; this principle applies, in particular, with regard to capital.

The Church's social doctrine teaches that **relations within the world of work must be marked by cooperation**: hatred and attempts to eliminate the other are completely unacceptable. This is also the case because in every social system **both "labour" and "capital" represent indispensable components of the process of production**.

No Christian, in light of the fact that he belongs to a united and fraternal community, should feel that he has the right not to work and to live at the expense of others (cf. 2 Thes 3:6-12). Rather, all are charged... to make it a point of honour to work with their own hands, so as to be dependent on nobody (1 Thes 4:12), and to practise a solidarity which is also material by sharing the fruits of their labour with "those in need" (Eph 4:28). – 264, 305-307, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

Corporations & Competition, and Consumers

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

– the 10th Commandment

The individual profit of an economic enterprise, although legitimate, must never become the sole objective. **Social utility is an objective of even higher order**. When the free market carries out the important functions mentioned above it becomes a service to the common good and to integral human development. When focused on profit alone, however, the market can degenerate into an inhuman and alienating institution, with uncontrollable repercussions.

Freedom in the economic sector... must be regulated by appropriate legal norms so that it will be placed at the service of integral human freedom... A great deal of educational and cultural work is urgently needed, **including the education of consumers in the responsible use of their power of choice, the formation of a strong sense of responsibility among producers and among people in the mass media in particular**, as well as necessary intervention by public authorities. In order to balance the principle of solidarity with the rights and obligations of the individual, **the State's intervention in the economic environment must be neither invasive nor absent, but commensurate with society's real needs**. "The State has a duty to sustain business activities by **creating conditions which will ensure job opportunities**, by stimulating those activities where they are lacking or by supporting them in moments of crisis. The State has the further right to intervene when particular monopolies create

- we have a special responsibility to the health and wellbeing of the young
- our community priorities must first protect the young and helpless
- local decision-making is important, but, as we learned during the civil rights era, strict federal standards must guide state actions in providing basic protections

The party advocates:

- as single mothers are the largest and most severely impoverished group in the United States, which explains why 22% of the children in our country live below the poverty line, and since welfare reform has forced mothers to abandon their children while they travel to work at minimum wage jobs, it advocates supports real reforms to end poverty and return dignity and opportunity to all mothers, including:
 - innovative programs that work with the particular and special needs of motherhood, in addition to general programs such as a universal basic income
 - restoration of a federally funded entitlement program to support children, families, the unemployed, elderly and disabled, with no time limit on benefits
 - funding of such a program through the existing welfare budget, reductions in military spending and corporate subsidies, and a fair, progressive income tax
- a graduated supplemental income, or negative income tax, that would maintain all individual adult incomes above the poverty level, regardless of employment or marital status
- reinvestment of a significant portion of the military budget into family support, living-wage job development, and work training programs
- publicly funded work training and education programs which have a goal of increasing employment options at finding living-wage jobs
- public funding for the development of living-wage jobs in community and environmental service. For example, environmental clean-up, recycling, sustainable agriculture and food production, sustainable forest management, repair and maintenance of public facilities, neighborhood-based public safety, aides in schools, libraries and childcare centers, and construction and renovation of energy-efficient housing
- ending of enterprise zone giveaways, which benefit corporations more than inner-city communities
- tax incentives for businesses that apply fair employee wage distribution standards, and income tax policies that restrict the accumulation of excessive individual wealth
- requiring corporations receiving public subsidies must provide jobs that pay a living wage, observe basic workers' rights, and agree to affirmative action policies

Livable Income

The party affirms the importance of access to a livable income, and advocates:

- a universal basic income (sometimes called a guaranteed income, negative income tax, citizen's income, or citizen dividend), to go to every adult regardless of health, employment, or marital status, in order to minimize government bureaucracy and intrusiveness into people's lives
- assuring such incomes in amounts sufficient so that anyone who is unemployed can afford basic food and shelter, with supplementation by state and local governments from local revenues where the cost of living is high
- prioritizing job banks and other innovative training and employment programs which bring together the private and public sector
- for people who are unable to find decent work in the private sector, options through publicly funded opportunities
- workforce development programs aimed at moving people out of poverty
- a clear living wage standard should serve as a foundation for trade between nations, and a "floor" of guaranteed wage protections and workers' rights should be negotiated in future trade agreements, with the United States taking the lead on this front
- ending destructive, predatory corporate practices under the guise of "free" international trade.

Housing

The party states that

- people have a right to a home and to be secure in their tenancy. However the supply of affordable housing is not meeting the need, while in an era of increasing deregulation, many tenants are losing important legal protections
- funding for affordable housing is decreasing, while rent control and tenant eviction protections do not exist in many jurisdictions
- housing discrimination also remains rampant against people of color, immigrants, disabled, single people, gays and lesbians, and families with children
- long-term stagnation of workers' real wages further exacerbates the lack of housing availability and affordability
- moreover, although increased affordable housing can help alleviate the problem of homelessness, the homeless have additional needs that go far beyond housing

The party advocates:

- guaranteed rights for tenants, including: freedom from harassment and evictions without just cause; well-enforced habitability standards; strong anti-discrimination enforcement, including family protection laws and domestic partnerships; continuation of established services and amenities; the right to reasonable guest visitation; maintenance of roommate privileges; and the right to communicate with other tenants about conditions or circumstances in their buildings, with strong penalties for landlords who violate these rights

delays or obstacles to development. -305-307, 351, 376 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

There is a growing loss of the sense of history, which leads to even further breakup. A kind of “deconstructionism”, whereby human freedom claims to create everything starting from zero, is making headway in today’s culture. The one thing it leaves in its wake is **the drive to limitless consumption and expressions of empty individualism** –12, *Fratelli Tutti*
Transportation & Infrastructure

The demands of the common good... are strictly connected to respect for and the integral promotion of the person and his fundamental rights. Among other things, these demands concern commitment to **the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation...** - 166, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

- funding of public and non-profit tenant-related counseling and legal assistance for renters
- defense and expansion of cities' right to enact local rent control laws, including vacancy control/recontrol, that fit the needs of their communities
- publicly elected Rent Control/Stabilization Boards for communities with local rent control laws
- preservation and increase of affordable housing inclusionary ordinances that fit the needs of their communities, so that the private sector will contribute its share of affordable housing construction
- funding for publicly built affordable housing, including funding for non-profit corporations that build affordable housing
- zoning to promote mixed-use development along transit corridors to locate housing next to jobs and public transportation
- ensuring that fair housing principles are emphasized in programs addressing the mortgage and financial crisis
- prevention of homelessness before it occurs by addressing its structural causes, through raising the income floor under the working poor, creating living-wage jobs, providing job training and education that will enable low-wage workers to obtain living-wage jobs, preserving and expanding affordable housing, providing affordable health care, ensuring sufficient mental health care and substance abuse services, availability of healthy food and providing effective, holistic assistance that connects vulnerable individuals with sources of income and essential services
- recognition that there are multiple, related and individualized causes of homelessness, and develop solutions that address them
- to increase employment for homeless people, setting aside a share of public-sector jobs for homeless people who are able to work, and ensuring that public agencies devoted to job creation are active in providing job training and work opportunities for homeless residents, with support non-profit agencies engaged in such work
- involving homeless people in decision-making about short- and long-term solutions to homelessness
- educating homeless people about their right to vote, and encouraging voter registration and voter participation among homeless people

Jobs, Unions, & Employment

The party states that:

- it proposes a third alternative to a job or no job dichotomy: to provide everyone a sustainable livelihood. The need of our times is for security, not necessarily jobs. We need security in the knowledge that, while markets may fluctuate and jobs may come and go, we are still able to lead a life rooted in dignity and well-being
- the concept of a "job" is only a few hundred years old; and the artificial dichotomy between "employment" and "unemployment" has become a tool of social leverage for corporate exploiters. This produces a dysfunctional society in various ways: (1) It is used to justify bringing harmful industries to rural communities, such as extensive prison construction and clear cutting of pristine forests. (2) It has been used to pit workers (people needing jobs) against the interests of their own communities. (3) It has created a self-esteem crisis in a large segment of the adult population who have been forced into doing work that is irrelevant, socially harmful, or environmentally unsound.
- the right to organize unions, bargain freely and strike when necessary is being eroded by employers and their representatives in government
- nearly one out of ten workers involved in union organizing drives is illegally fired by employers who want to keep workers from exercising a genuinely free choice
- as union membership falls, so do the wages of all working people, union and non-union alike
- it supports the irreducible right of working people, without hindrance, to form unions and to bargain collectively with their employers, as guaranteed under the National Labor Relations Act of 1935
- it supports the right of workers, without penalty, to inform other workers on the premises of a union being formed, including the right to advertise and recruit
- a major consequence of enacting living wage laws that apply to all workers would be lessening of the ever-widening gap between CEOs' income and workers' pay. The growing gap between rich and poor is destructive of democracy and creates an uneven playing field for economic opportunity
- public welfare that depends on hand-outs from the corporate rich reduces democracy by that same amount
- every citizen is entitled to the leverage necessary to become a productive member of the economy and the society in which we live

The party advocates:

- creation of work that does not jeopardize our future or widen the gap between the richest and the poorest in our society, and that can enrich our communities
- creating alternative, low-consumption communities and living arrangements, including a reinvigorated sustainable homesteading movement in rural areas and voluntary shared housing in urban areas
- establishing local non-profit development corporations.
- providing people with information about alternatives to jobs
- adopting a reduced-hour (30-35 hours) work week as a standard. This could translate into as many as 26 million new jobs
- subsidizing renewable energy sources, which directly employ 2 to 5 times as many people for every unit of electricity generated as fossil or nuclear sources yet are cost competitive
- supporting small business by reducing tax, fee and bureaucratic burdens
- opposing the trend toward "bundling" of contracts that minimizes opportunity for small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses
- reducing consumption to minimize outsourcing — the exportation of jobs to other countries—thus reducing the relative price of using U.S. workers.

- a complete overhaul of this country's labor laws
- a right of employees to sit equally with management on company the Boards of Directors
- the right of members to fair and democratic elections of their own union officers
- prohibiting the permanent replacement of striking workers
- the prohibition of forced overtime
- flexible working schedules so employees can arrange their own time to deal with personal and family concerns
- the right of all workers, temporary or permanent, to a living wage
- a federal minimum wage for all workers of at least \$15 per hour, indexed to inflation
- health care coverage for all workers, at least half paid by employer, until the passage of universal health care
- unemployment insurance, workers compensation, and access to a jobs search program for all unemployed workers, including farm workers as well
- fully vested and portable pension benefits, which do not reduce social security benefits, for all workers
- mediation as the first available solution to labor– management disputes, with an agreed-upon time limit
- labor's first right to buy out a company that is for sale or is going bankrupt, or being outsourced to another state or another country
- requiring employers who purchase or merge with other companies to honor all existing collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- labor's right to stock ownership and oversight of the investment of its own funds in the company where it works
- encouragement of cooperative ownership and management of enterprises
- restriction of management's ability to close its workplace and move to a lower-pay locale, to protect the local workforce and their job security
- establishment of a reduced-hour work week and at least one month of vacation per year for all workers
- to ensure that all workers have safe and humane working environments, protection and enforcement of OSHA laws, adequate testing of equipment and funding of enforcement procedures, informing workers of workplace hazards

Pension Reform

The party advocates:

- to give workers options concerning investment of their pension funds, including those used for corporate mergers, acquisitions and leveraged buyouts, decisions that undercut workers rights, employment, and retirement while generously rewarding non-productive speculation, joint control of corporate-sponsored pension funds (the biggest category of funds) by management and workers, not exclusively management
- implementation of federal laws to enable pension funds to simply seek a reasonable rate of return, not the prevailing market rate which greatly restricts where investments can be made
- establishment of a secondary pension market by the government to insure pension investments made in socially beneficial programs must be considered as one method that could greatly expand the impact of this capital market

Small Businesses, Trades & Crafts

The party states that:

- small businesses are where the jobs are being created. Over the past decade and a half, all new net job growth has come from the small business sector
- conservation should be profitable, and employment should be creative, meaningful and fairly compensated
- access to capital is often an essential need in growing a business
- the present tax system acts to discourage small business as it encourages waste, discourages conservation, and rewards consumption.
- big business has used insider access to dominate the federal tax code. The tax system needs a major overhaul to favor the legitimate and critical needs of the small business community
- retention of capital through retained earnings, efficiencies, and savings is central to small business competitiveness. Current tax policies often act to unfairly penalize small business

The party advocates:

- going beyond the dedicated good work being done by many "socially responsible businesses" to present new ways of seeing how business can help create a sustainable world, while surviving in a competitive business climate
- reduction of unnecessary restrictions, fees, bureaucracy, including in particular use of the Paper Simplification Act should as a way to benefit small business the self-employed
- full tax deductions for health insurance premiums paid by the self-employed
- examination of the use of pension funds (the result of workers' investments) as additional sources of capital for small business
- reduction of insurance costs by means of active engagement with the insurance industry, and expansion of insurance pools
- one-stop government offices to assist individuals who want to change careers or go into business for the first time
- support for home offices

Corporations

The party states that:

- the legal imperative of profit above all else is damaging the nation and our planet in countless ways. We must change the legal design of corporations so that they generate profits, but not at the expense of the environment, human rights, public health, workers, or the communities in which the corporation operates

The party advocates:

- reducing the economic and political power of large corporations, ending corporate personhood, and re-designing corporations to serve our society, democracy and the environment

- strong and effectively enforced antitrust laws and regulation to counteract the concentration of economic and political power that imposes a severe toll on people, places and the planet. Greens believe the legal structure of the corporation is obsolete

- prevention and justice are at the heart of consumer protection

- millions of lives will be saved or lost depending on the strength of our consumer protection laws

- it aims to stop corporations and others from defrauding consumers or endangering them with defective products or negligence

- it stands with consumers who have been injured or defrauded by corporations and others, and with whistleblowers, who are often the public's best protection against corporate crime, fraud and waste

Banks and Finance

The party states that:

- because finance, banking, and insurance institutions occupy a privileged position of power at the center of commerce, this special advantage brings with it special social responsibilities

- the nation must ensure that institutions chartered for these roles take that responsibility seriously and serve the public interest

- it aims to reform the financial industry to eliminate usury (exorbitantly high interest rates on loans) and ensure that they meet their obligations to taxpayers and local communities

The party advocates:

- overhauling the financial industry to end its culture of impunity and to prevent it from committing fraud or malfeasance so severe as to drive our nation into a massive recession or depression

- breaking up the nation's largest banks and financial institutions so that none is "too big to fail"

- ending taxpayer-funded bailouts for banks, insurers and other financial companies

- regulating all financial derivatives, banning predatory or gambling use of derivatives, and requiring full transparency for all derivative trades, to control risk of systemic financial collapse.

- requiring regulatory preapproval of exotic financial instruments

- reinstatement of the Glass-Steagall Act, which prohibited bank holding companies from owning other financial companies and engaging in risky economic transactions

- ending federal government guarantees for speculative investments

- ensuring that relief provided by the federal government during a financial crisis is provided in an equal manner and at the most local level possible, so that benefits are equitably dispersed and burdens are equitably born

- ensuring that low- and middle-income people have access to banking services, affordable loans, and small-business supporting capital, especially through credit unions

- ending disinvestment practices in which lending and financial institutions move money deposited in local communities out of those same communities, damaging the best interests of their customers and community

- extension of the Community Reinvestment Act to provide public and timely information on the extent of housing loans, small business loans to minority-owned enterprises, investments in community development projects, and affordable housing

- strengthening of disclosure laws, anti-redlining laws, and openness on the part of lenders regarding what criteria they use in making lending decisions

- development of charter community development banks capitalized with public funds and working to meet the credit needs of local communities

- prosecution of criminal banking speculation

- a moratorium on foreclosures. An ongoing mortgage-related crime wave is occurring around fraudulent foreclosures, rushed through without proper legal clearances or documentation, often on properties which foreclosing entities cannot even prove they own

- restructuring of the monetary system, to prevent misdirection of resources to speculation, toxic loans, and phony financial instruments that create huge profits for the few but no real wealth or jobs

- to reverse the privatization of control over the money issuing process of our nation's monetary system; reverse its resulting concentration of wealth and income; and to end the regular recurrence of severe and disruptive banking crises, nationalizing the 12 Federal Reserve Banks, reconstituting them and

the Federal Reserve Systems Washington Board of Governors under a new Monetary Authority Board within the U.S. Treasury

- insurance reform, including elimination of special-interest protections, collusion, over-pricing and industry-wide practices that injure the interests of the insured when they are most vulnerable

Anti-Trust Enforcement

The party states that:

- the anti-trust division of the Justice Department has had its scope and powers reduced
- growth in unregulated mergers and acquisitions, spinoffs, and leveraged buy-outs has overwhelmed the federal government's capacity to provide effective Oversight
- financial and trading markets have become particularly vulnerable to insider trading. Securities and Exchange Commission regulation of these markets has seriously fallen short

The party advocates:

- strong and effective enforcement of anti-trust regulations to counteract the concentration of economic power
- redefinition of "relevant market share" in assessing mergers
- Congressional action to stop illegal monopolistic practices

Technology & Defense

The party states that:

- it supports defense technology transfer towards a peacetime technology-based economy, particularly new industrial applications and developments in the areas of advanced communications, alternative energy, non-toxic battery technology and waste management
- consolidation of the nuclear weapons complex should move toward alternative civilian technologies and non-proliferation work, not toward a new generation of nuclear weapon design and production

The party advocates:

- going forward with government and civilian space programs; research initiatives in sustainability science, environmental protection, ecological economics and transportation, appropriate technologies and technology transfer; environmental sampling and monitoring; systems testing; laser communications; and high speed computers
- ending patenting or copyrighting life forms, algorithms, DNA, colors or commonly used words and phrases, and broad interpretation and ultimate expansion of the Fair Use of copyrighted works

Nanotechnology

The party states that like nuclear science and biotechnology, nanotechnology is being pursued largely outside of public debate, risking great harm and abuse in its use and application

The party advocates halting nanotechnology development until the following conditions are met:

- development of full and open public debate about the implications of nanotechnology and the fusion of nanotech with biological, materials and information sciences
- development of democratic public control mechanisms to regulate the direction of nanotechnology research and development
- expanded research into the environmental and health consequences of exposure to nano-scale materials
- development of technology and precautionary safety measures for containment and control over nano-scale materials and development

Consumers

The party advocates:

- strong consumer protections against fraud, dangerous products, usury, corporate greed and rip-offs, including strengthening of product safety standards and enforcement for a variety of products, including food, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals and airplanes
- restoration of state health, safety, and consumer protection laws by striking federal pre-emptions that weaken state law
- preservation and expansion of product labeling requirements to ensure that consumers are informed about the origin, ingredients and ecological life cycle of all products, including animal testing and the product's organic, recycled and genetically-engineered content, and inclusion of information about the nutritional value and the vegetarian or vegan status of food products
- prohibiting corporations from concealing information about public health, labor conditions or environmental safety via protective orders or confidential settlements

- expansion of class action rights against manufacturers of unsafe products and practices, and strengthen the civil justice system and supply the resources necessary to bring to justice to those corporations that injure innocent consumers
- protection for whistle blowers against demotion, job loss, and other forms of retaliation
- ending of "tort reform" that undermines consumers' ability to seek redress, and "medical malpractice reform" that relieves negligent doctors of responsibility for injuring or killing their patients
- granting consumers the right to limit collection and secondary use of personal information by any commercial entity
- prohibiting loan and credit card interest rates higher 12% annually, indexed for inflation
- prohibiting the widespread practice of price gouging against women and the poor
- restoration of Chapter 7 bankruptcy as a viable final safety net for consumers caught by health crises, unaffordable mortgages, credit card debts and student loans
- banning the use of mandatory arbitration clauses in consumer contracts, to protect consumers from anti-consumer and unfair dispute resolution processes
- establishment of new independent government consumer advocacy agencies to protect the interests of consumers and restoration of the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs
- policies to encourage citizens, taxpayers, ratepayers and consumers to form Citizens Utility Boards to advocate for the public interest.

Agriculture

The party states that:

- all people have a right to adequate, safe, nutritional and high quality food; and those who grow it have a right to a fair return for their labor
- the nation's industrialized agriculture system is highly destructive of our environment, of our people's health, and of our society's future. Unless it changes radically, we face desertification, ecosystem collapse, mass extinctions, and starvation. Our civilization itself is threatened by the loss of the ecosystem services on which it depends for its existence
- agriculture is the high-order term in climate change, not only because of the amount of carbon it contributes to the atmosphere, but more importantly because of the vital role it could play in sequestering carbon and restoring a healthy carbon cycle
- among other things, the adoption of regenerative agriculture throughout the food system will put a stop to unethical confined animal operations, improve the diversity and nutritional content of our food, and rationalize the pricing and distribution of food

The party advocates:

- legislation that assists new and existing farmers and ranchers to convert their operations to regenerative agricultural methods that promote widespread ownership of small and medium-sized farms and ranches, and that revitalizes and repopulates rural communities and promotes sustainable development and stewardship
- legislation and regulations that promote foods produced using regenerative methods, including no-till/minimum till, natural soil building techniques, development of natural soil biomes, and set-asides for wildlife alongside cultivated areas
- a regionalized food system and decentralization of agriculture lands, production, and distribution
- promotion of producer and consumer cooperatives, community kitchens, Community Supported Agriculture, urban agriculture, and community farms and gardens
- creation of a Food Policy Council composed of farmers, including small farmers and consumers, to oversee the USDA and all food policies at the local, state, and national level, without powers to adjudicate conflicts of interest that arise when industries police themselves
- shifting price supports and government subsidies to organic, regeneratively produced food products so that they will be competitive with chemically produced food
- banning of sewage sludge or hazardous wastes as fertilizer, and of irradiation and the use of genetic engineering in all food production
- phasing out of man-made pesticides and artificial fertilizers in favor of Integrated Pest Management techniques
- food prices that reflect the true cost of food, including the health effects of eating processed foods, antibiotic resistance, pesticide effects on growers and consumers, soil erosion, water pollution, pesticide drift, and air pollution
- ethical and sustainable methods of animal husbandry, including a rapid phase out of confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and a complete transition to an integrated, regenerative agriculture approach to the cultivation, treatment, and use of livestock, not only for environmental reasons, but also for the sake of food safety (e.g. disease epidemics), public health, and animal protection
- application of the Precautionary Principle to genetically modified organisms (GMOs), including a moratorium until safety can be demonstrated by independent (non-corporate funded), long-term tests for food safety, genetic drift, resistance, soil health, effects on non-target organisms, and cumulative interactions
- elimination of patent rights for genetic material, life forms, gene-splicing techniques, and bio-chemicals derived from them
- mandatory, full-disclosure food and fiber labeling, including contents, method of production, source of origin, presence of GMOs, use of irradiation, pesticide application (in production, transport, storage, and retail), compliance with organic standards
- coverage of agricultural and other excluded workers by federal labor laws, except where existing state laws offer more protection
- coverage of agricultural workers under the jurisdiction of OSHA

- ending industrialized agriculture methods, including monocropping, reliance on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, and the use of confined animal operations, all of which are high-order contributors to atmospheric greenhouse gases
- converting food producing systems to small-scale organic, regenerative agriculture (agroecology) systems to restore soil health, sequester carbon, foster biodiversity, discourage the currently unsustainable level of meat consumption, and secure robust ecosystem services for a sustainable future
- replacement of subsidized, industrially-produced agricultural products with support for small producers employing organic, regenerative agricultural methods
- localized food distribution systems to minimize waste, build rural communities, and eliminate reliance on fossil fuels
- relocalization and decarbonization of the food system

Infrastructure & Transportation

The party advocates:

- increased development of clean public transportation, including electric vehicles of all types
- decentralization of the electric power grid into a bioregional system for generation and distribution of electricity, with smart grid updates and net metering

Pedestrians & Cyclists

The party advocates:

- encouraging pedestrians and bicyclists, by making streets, neighborhoods and commercial districts more pedestrian friendly, increasing the greenery of streets, and utilizing traffic-calming methods, where the design of streets promotes safe speeds and safe interaction with pedestrians.
- creating auto-free zones by developing extensive networks of bikeways, bicycle lanes and paths and maintain free community bicycle fleets

Rail

The party advocates:

- expanding the national network of rail lines, including high-speed regional passenger service
- transferring ownership and operation of all intercity railroad trackage currently under control of freight railroads to responsible and adequately funded public agencies, as is done with highways, to provide for efficiency and safety of all rail traffic

Autos & Trucks

The party advocates:

- a moratorium on highway widening, appropriating funds instead for mass transit and facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- mandating HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) lanes on freeways, and lower tolls for carpools
- discouraging unnecessary auto use by eliminating free parking in non-residential areas well served by mass transit, and preferential parking rates for HOV
- regular increases in Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards to levels which truly challenge automakers to improve the state of the art, using the fuel economy performance of vehicles worldwide for reference
- a Fee & Dividend system on the carbon content of gasoline, Diesel fuel and E85, and a fuel-economy-based Federal sales tax that creates a significant incentive for people to select more efficient vehicles, and for automakers to make them available
- electrification of truck stops, freight terminals and loading docks
- enactment and enforcement of anti-idling regulations
- encouraging carpooling programs, telecommuting, and other creative solutions to reduce commuter traffic congestion

Air Travel

The party advocates:

- making airports accessible by local transit systems
- further incremental reductions in airplane noise and air pollution

Innovation

The party advocates:

- creation of an inclusive program to train workers for the new, clean energy economy. Focusing on both the environment and social justice, prioritize the creation of green jobs in communities of color and low-income Ecological Sustainability communities
- transitioning to 100 percent renewable energy by 2030 using wind, solar, ocean, small-scale hydro, and geothermal power
- end the use of nuclear power, which is massively polluting, dangerous, financially risky, expensive and slow to implement, and diverting funds to wind, solar, geothermal, conservation and small-scale hydroelectric



LIBERTARIAN PARTY

An Economy for All

The party states that:

- it wants all members of society to have abundant opportunities to achieve economic success. A free and competitive market allocates resources in the most efficient manner
- each person has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. The only proper role of government in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected
- all efforts by government to redistribute wealth, or to control or manage trade, are improper in a free society

Poverty Reduction

The party states that:

- the proper and most effective source of help for the poor is the voluntary efforts of private groups and individuals. It believes members of society will become even more charitable and civil society will be strengthened as government reduces its activity in this realm

Property and Contract

The party states that:

- the freedom to contract to obtain, retain, profit from, manage, or dispose of one's property must be upheld. Libertarians would free property owners from government restrictions on their rights to control and enjoy their property, as long as their choices do not harm or infringe on the rights of others
- eminent domain, civil asset forfeiture, governmental limits on profits, governmental production mandates, and governmental controls on prices of goods and services (including wages, rents, and interest) are abridgements of such fundamental rights
- in voluntary dealings among private entities, parties should be free to choose with whom they trade and set whatever trade terms are mutually agreeable

Marketplace Freedom

The party states that:

- it supports free markets, and defends the right of individuals to form corporations, cooperatives and other types of entities based on voluntary association
- it opposes all forms of government subsidies and bailouts to business, labor, or any other special interest
- government should not compete with private enterprise

Labor & Employment

The party states that:

- employment and compensation agreements between private employers and employees are outside the scope of government, and these contracts should not be encumbered by government-mandated benefits or social engineering
- it supports the right of private employers and employees to choose whether or not to bargain with each other through a labor union. Bargaining should be free of government interference, such as compulsory arbitration or imposing an obligation to bargain

Licensing

The party states that:

- it supports the right of every person to earn an honest and peaceful living through the free and voluntary exchange of goods and services. Accordingly, it opposes occupational and other licensing laws that infringe on this right or treat it as a state-granted privilege
- it encourages certifications by voluntary associations of professionals

Sex Work

The party states that it supports the decriminalization of prostitution, and asserts the right of consenting adults to provide sexual services to clients for compensation, and the right of clients to purchase sexual services from consenting sex workers

Pensions; Retirement and Income Security

The party states that:

- retirement planning is the responsibility of the individual, not the government
- it would phase out the current government-sponsored Social Security system and transition to a private voluntary system
- the proper and most effective source of help for the poor is the voluntary efforts of private groups and individuals. It believes members of society will become even more charitable and civil society will be strengthened as government reduces its activity in this realm

Money and Financial Markets

The party states that:

- it advocates free-market banking, with unrestricted competition among banks and depository institutions of all types
- markets are not actually free unless fraud is vigorously combated
- those who enjoy the possibility of profits must not impose risks of losses upon others, such as through government guarantees or bailouts
- it supports ending federal student loan guarantees and special treatment of student loan debt in bankruptcy proceedings
- individuals engaged in voluntary exchange should be free to use as money any mutually agreeable commodity or item
- it supports a halt to inflationary monetary policies and unconstitutional legal tender laws



REPUBLICAN PARTY

Poverty Reduction

The party advocates poverty reduction programs effective for reducing poverty while increasing the independence of its participants, for example to reduce intergenerational poverty through implementation of work requirements in a growing economy, by reducing regulation and improving prospects for new and growing businesses

Living wage

The party advocates leaving decisions concerning minimum wages to the states

Jobs, Unions, Employment, Industries & Corporations

The party states that:

- the overarching goal of its platform is to put people back to work by fostering the kind of growth that creates jobs, and that this goal drives its commitments on education, workforce development, welfare and regulatory reform, and foreign trade agreements
- it party considers the establishment of a pro-growth tax code a moral imperative.

Unions and Workers' Rights

The party advocates:

- ending union privileges for government defense agencies
- reforming labor laws to encourage cooperation, rather than conflict, between labor and management, freedom of all workers to accept raises and new assignments without approval from union officials, transparency of union finances, and the right to work in non-unionized shops.

Small businesses, trades & crafts

The party advocates:

- regulatory relief for community banks, to support small businesses, including legislative overturning of the Dodd-Frank law
- reducing the occupational licensing laws to minimize restraints on entrepreneurs
- encouraging the established research structure to form partnerships with small businesses

Technology & Innovation

The party envisions government at all levels as a partner with individuals and industries in technological progress, and wants to create a business climate that rewards risk and promotes innovation, a learning system that gives Americans the skills needed to seize the opportunities of the 21st century, and an international order that maintains a fair and open global market for America's goods and services.

The party advocates:

- balanced protections for intellectual property
- paving the way for high-speed, next-generation broadband deployment and competition on the internet
- encouragement of the sharing economy and on-demand platforms to compete in an open market
- modernization of government IT systems and personnel
- universal broadband connection
- expanded space exploration
- a free internet market, open to all ideas and competition without government or service provider picking winners and losers.

Manufacturing, Industries & Agriculture

The party states that:

- it regards itself as the party of America's growers, producers, farmers, ranchers, foresters, miners, commercial fishermen, and all those who bring from the earth the crops, minerals, energy, and the bounties of our seas that are the lifeblood of our economy
- the labor and ingenuity of such people, their determination in bad times and love of the land at all times, powers our economy, creates millions of jobs, and feeds billions of people around the world

The party advocates:

- expanding trade opportunities and opening new markets for agriculture
- ensuring that global competitiveness is not compromised through over-regulation, particularly with respect to dairy and poultry products
- cost-effective risk management for farming and ranching
- promotion of active, sustainable forest management, particularly under the authority of the states

Transportation & Infrastructure

The party states that:

- it supports the country's tradition of bi-partisan investments in transportation and infrastructure,
- it believes that everyone agrees on the need for clean water and safe roads, rail, bridges, ports, and airports.

The party advocates:

- review of the federal Highway Trust Fund, to remove programs that should not be the business of the federal government, such as mass transit, which is inherently a local affair, as well as bike-share, sidewalks, recreational trails, landscaping, and historical renovations.
- phasing out of the federal transit program and reformation of the National Environmental Policy Act to end delay and higher costs for transportation projects.
- ending Federal / Amtrak rail monopolies and allowing private passenger rail service in the northeast corridor, and on high-speed and intercity rail systems across the country
- renovation of the interstate electric transmission grid

Corporations & Consumers

The party advocates:

- a right of free political speech, including unlimited campaign donations, for corporations
- repeal of the Dodd-Frank banking act, to reduce regulation of banks
- abolishment of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which answers neither to Congress nor the Executive, or subjection of it to Congressional appropriation
- legislation to ensure that problems of any financial institution can be solved through the Bankruptcy Code, rather than government bailouts
- prudent regulation of the banking system to ensure that FDIC-regulated banks are properly capitalized and taxpayers are protected from bailouts.
- ending government's use of disparate impact theory in enforcing anti-discrimination laws for lending
- reforming Federal Reserve practices, including transparency in announcement of policy and lending decisions
- implementing annual audit of Federal Reserve activities, in such a way as to keep it insulated from political pressures.
- enactment of legislation passed by Congress to set a fixed value for the US dollar.

Points to Ponder: An Economy to Serve People

Consider discussing the following questions with your local candidates, elected officials, and the parties, and with your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and fellow parishioners:

Poverty Reduction

- What can or should be done to ensure that all Americans are encouraged and enabled to apply the full range of their talents and gifts to the care of their families, to lift themselves out of poverty, and in doing so to give praise to God as co-creators, through meaningful creative work?
- How can the United States best strike a balance between the principles of solidarity – ‘we’re all in this together’ – and subsidiarity – ‘everyone should do what he or she can to support themselves, before burdening others?’
- What is an appropriate definition of poverty, particularly in a society overflowing with consumer objects and material wealth? Should such definitions include consideration of the ability of individuals to seek personal fulfillment in pursuing truth?
- What, if anything, should be done to ensure that a dignified living wage, capable of providing a dignified home and opportunity to support a family is available to workers, or those willing to work, or to reduce poverty in the United States? Should a basic income policy be considered? If so, what form should it take? What can or should be done by the states, and what should be left to the federal government, or to private or community organizations?
- It has been observed that debt levels among the elderly are increasing, especially as the costs of long-term, dignified care increase. What can or should be done to alleviate poverty and debt among the elderly?

GDP & Well-Being

For decades, governments have focused exclusively on gross domestic product – a measure of an economy’s sheer productivity – as the best measure of national economic health. More recently, some voices have begun to advocate for a broader index of national well-being, to include factors such as the physical and emotional health of the people, the health of the environment, equity in housing, income, and opportunity, and food security, in addition to raw production.

- Which of these approaches is more likely to reflect the well being of current and future national, state, or local populations, and their ability to achieve personal fulfillment in seeking and finding truth?
- What else can or should be done to ensure that the American economy serves the people, rather than the other way around? Is it reasonable to demand continuous economic growth, or might it be preferable to seek sustainable contentment?

Businesses and Corporations

For decades, corporate lobby groups and business schools have taught that the only legitimate object of a business corporation is to make money for its shareholders. More recently, some business voices have begun to advocate a broader role for corporations, to include service of its employees, its customers, and the community, and protection of the environment, as part of a corporation’s proper role.

- Which of these object definitions is more consistent with church teachings? Should anything be done to encourage development of a corporate and business culture that aims to serve people, communities, and future generations, in addition to profits? If so, what?
- Some parties have called for an unfettered right of free political speech, including unlimited campaign contributions, for corporations. In the event such a right is recognized, what effect might it have on rights, freedoms, and control of government in the United States?

The Individual & Society: Rights, Responsibilities, & Subsidiarity

Civil Liberties | Human Rights | Responsibilities: Participation & Subsidiarity

Catholic Teaching

Civil Rights & Liberties

Every member of society is imbued with a number of rights. **With them come responsibilities.**

In Catholic terms, a “right” has been defined as a subjective moral power, residing in the person posing it, “to do, hold, or extract something,” which functions through appeal to another’s will through the other person’s intellect. It is to be distinguished from might, i.e. the physical force or power to take something away from another. – Fr John Hardon, SJ, *Modern Catholic Dictionary*

Man’s history of sin begins when he no longer acknowledges the Lord as his Creator and himself wishes to be the one who determines, with complete independence, what is good and what is evil. "You will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:5): this was the first temptation, and it is echoed in all the other temptations to which man is more easily inclined to yield as a result of the original Fall. – Pope Saint John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*

Racism & Discrimination

The unity of the human family is **not yet becoming a reality**. This is due to obstacles originating in materialistic and nationalistic ideologies that contradict the values of the person integrally considered in all his various dimensions, material and spiritual, individual and community. **In particular, any theory or form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable.** – 433, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Conscience & Religion

The Catholic Church emphasizes, among other rights, **the right to religious freedom**. Emphasis is given to the paramount value of the right to religious freedom: “**all men are to be immune from coercion** on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits”. The respect of this right is an indicative sign of “man’s authentic progress in any regime, in any society, system or milieu.” -320, 321 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

With euthanasia and medically-assisted death and abortion legalized, it is critical that healthcare providers whose deepest moral convictions tell them that such procedures are



DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Civil Liberties

Discrimination

The party states that:

- it will root out structural and systemic racism in the national economy and our society, and reform the criminal justice system from top to bottom
- it will ensure that our nation continues to prize diversity and compassion, and to welcome those who yearn to participate in the nation’s great democratic experiment
- it will give hate no safe harbor, will never amplify or legitimize the voices of racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry, or white supremacy
- it will protect and promote the equal rights of all citizens, including women, LGBTQ+ people, religious minorities, people with disabilities, Native Americans, and all who have been discriminated against

The party advocates:

- diversity in appointment of federal judges, reflecting the diversity of America
- removal of the Confederate flag and statues of Confederate leaders from public properties
- recognition of Juneteenth (June 19) as a federal holiday
- enactment of the Equality Act to outlaw discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in housing, public accommodations, access to credit, education, jury service, and federal programs, in adoption of children, bullying and assault
- banning conversion therapy
- ensuring that federally funded programs for older adults are inclusive for LGBTQ+ seniors

Freedom of speech

The party states that it will restore FCC authority to pursue broadband providers who violate net neutrality principles or artificially raise prices for access

Truth & freedom of the press

The party states that that the free press is essential to our free democracy.

The party advocates:

- appointment of an independent media professional to head the US Agency for Global Media, to ensure that news and information projected by the federal government meets the highest standards of fact-based journalism
- out of concern for potentially harmful effects of corporate consolidation in the media industry, reinstating and strengthening media ownership rules and antitrust review of impacts of mergers

Religion & conscience

The party states that religious freedom is a core American value.

The party advocates:

- protection of the free exercise of religion
- action to advocate religious freedom throughout the world
- increased funding for security and protection at houses of worship
- action against hate crimes against religious minorities

The party has published no official statement concerning its polices on:

- rights to privacy
- rights to private property

Gender equity

wrong, not be forced to participate. Catholic teaching says workers should be safeguarded from suffering any affront to conscience or personal dignity.

It is a grave duty of conscience to avoid cooperating, even formally, with practices contrary to the Law of God.

Freedom of Speech: truth, the press & the media

Information is among the principal instruments of democratic participation. **Participation without an understanding of the situation of the political community, the facts and the proposed solutions to problems is unthinkable.**

It is necessary to guarantee a real pluralism in the dissemination of information, ensuring that there are many forms and instruments of information and communications. Special attention must be given to the phenomenon of the news media being controlled by just a few people or groups. This has dangerous effects for the entire democratic system... The media must be used to build up and sustain the human community in its different sectors: economic, political, cultural, educational and religious. Society has a right to information based on truth, freedom, justice and solidarity. **The essential question is whether the current information system is contributing to the betterment of the human person;** that is, does it make people more spiritually mature, more aware of the dignity of their humanity, more responsible or more open to others, in particular to the neediest and the weakest.

A further aspect of great importance is that **new technologies must respect legitimate cultural differences.** In the world of the media the intrinsic difficulties of communications are often exacerbated by ideology, the desire for profit and political control, rivalry and conflicts between groups, and other social evils. Moral values and principles apply also to the media.... 414-416, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Gender Equity

The feminine genius is needed in all expressions in the life of society. The first indispensable step in this direction is the concrete possibility of access to professional formation. The persistence of many forms of discrimination offensive to the dignity and vocation of women is due to **a long series of conditioning that penalizes women**, who have seen themselves relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude... An urgent need to recognize effectively the rights of women in the workplace is seen **especially under the aspects of pay, insurance and social security.** –295, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

The party advocates:

- guaranteed equal pay for women
- ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment
- overturning federal and state laws that create barriers to women's reproductive health and rights, including by repealing the Hyde Amendment and protecting and codifying the right to reproductive freedom
- protecting rights of pregnant women in the workplace, including by requiring employers to make reasonable accommodations for pregnant and breastfeeding workers and those who have recently given birth, and enacting paid sick days and universal paid family and medical leave

Human Rights

Housing

The party states that housing should be within reach of all, and that no one should have to pay more than 30% of their income on it

The party advocates:

- providing Section 8 housing support for every eligible family and ending landlord discrimination
- equal access to credit and improved down payment assistance for families of color, low income families, and rural buyers
- a new refundable and advanceable tax credit of up to \$15,000 for first-time home buyers
- expanding low-income housing tax credits as an incentive to builders
- providing energy efficiency upgrades
- vigorous enforcement of fair housing laws

Clean Water

The party states that every American has the right to breathe clean air, drink clean water, and live without fear of exposure to toxic waste, especially those who have been left out and left behind for generations

The party advocates:

- historic investments aimed at eliminating legacy pollution
- clean and reliable drinking water for every community in America
- replacement of dangerous lead pipes
- investment in innovative water technologies to increase efficiency, conservation, re-use and recycling of water

Subsidiarity & Participation

Civic Organizations

The party advocates:

- using grants and relationships with community organizations to ensure workers know their rights and responsibilities under labor law
- statehood for the District of Columbia
- self-determination for Puerto Rico
- voting rights for US territories
- ending all efforts to privatize the US postal service

The party has published no official statement concerning its policies on:

- the role of the church and other moral institutions
- the roles of agencies, states, or municipalities

GREEN PARTY

The Individual and Society

The party states, among its ten key values, that:

- centralization of wealth and power contributes to social and economic injustice, environmental destruction, and militarization
- it seeks a restructuring of social, political and economic institutions away from a system controlled by and mostly benefiting the powerful few, to a democratic, less

Property

Private property and other forms of private ownership of goods “assure a person a highly necessary sphere for the exercise of his personal and family autonomy and ought to be considered as an extension of human freedom ... stimulating exercise of responsibility, it constitutes one of the conditions for civil liberty.” -171, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

The Church’s social doctrine requires that ownership of goods be equally accessible to all, so that all may become, at least in some measure, owners. **The world exists for everyone, because all of us were born with the same dignity.** Differences of colour, religion, talent, place of birth or residence, and so many others, cannot be used to justify the privileges of some over the rights of all. As a community, **we have an obligation to ensure that every person lives with dignity and has sufficient opportunities for his or her integral development.** -176, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Not to share our wealth with the poor is to rob them and take away their livelihood. The riches we possess are not our own, but theirs as well... Other rights having to do with the goods necessary for the integral fulfilment of persons, including that of private property or any other type of property, should in no way hinder [this right], but should actively facilitate its implementation. *Fratelli tutti*, -188-120

Human Rights

The Church also recognizes a number of Human Rights, including “**the right to life**, an integral part of which is the right of the child to develop in the mother’s womb from the moment of conception; **the right to live in a united family** and in a moral environment conducive to the growth of the child’s personality; the right to develop one’s intelligence and freedom in seeking and **knowing the truth**; the right to share in the **work** which makes wise use of the earth’s material resources, and to derive from that work the means to support oneself and one’s dependents; and the right freely to **establish a family**, to have and to rear children through the responsible exercise of one’s sexuality. The Church also emphasizes rights to **adequate housing; clean water, and secure, nutritious food; education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care.** – 151-166 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Individual Responsibilities

“In human society to one man’s right there corresponds a duty in all other persons: the duty, namely, of acknowledging and respecting the right in question.” **“Those, therefore,**

bureaucratic system

- decision-making should, as much as possible, remain at the individual and local level, while assuring that civil rights are protected for all
- it encourages individuals to act to improve their personal wellbeing and, at the same time, to enhance ecological balance and social harmony
- it seeks to join with people and organizations around the world to foster peace, economic justice, and the health of the planet
- the foundation of any democratic society is the guarantee that each member of society has equal rights
- respect for our constitutionally protected rights is our best defense against discrimination and the abuse of power
- it also recognizes an intimate connection between our rights as individuals and our responsibilities to our neighbors and the planet
- it shall strive to secure universal and effective recognition and observance of the principles and spirit expressed in the United National Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an international standard that all nations must meet

The party advocates:

- amending the US Constitution to clarify that human rights and freedoms attach only to living human beings, and not to corporations or other juridical persons, and that juridical persons have no permanent, constitutionally protected rights, though they may have such powers or immunities as are explicitly granted to them by legislative actions at either the federal or the state level

Gender Equity

The party states, among its key values, that:

- the nation has inherited a social system based on male domination of politics and economics
- it calls for the replacement of the cultural ethics of domination and control with cooperative ways of interacting that respect differences of opinion and gender
- human values such as gender equity, interpersonal responsibility, and honesty must be developed with moral conscience
- it recognizes that the processes for determining a nation’s decisions and actions are just as important as achieving the outcomes the nation wants

The party advocates:

- U.S. passage of CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and ratified by 173 countries and is also known as the Women's Convention, the Women's Bill of Rights, together with an International Bill of Rights for Women
- passage of the Equal Rights Act
- noting that the illegal international trafficking in humans, primarily women, has reached staggering numbers and consequences around the world, the party supports the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women and Children, which supplements the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime adopted by the UN General Assembly in November 2000 as an important tool to facilitate international cooperation
- investigation and prosecution by the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission of sexual harassment complaints
- equal numbers of women and men in Congress, peace talks, and negotiations, not only because these efforts directly affect their lives and those of their husbands, children and families, but also because when women are involved, the negotiations are more successful
- intensified effort to close the unfair male-female wage gap, including support for the Paycheck Fairness Act and similar legislation, and greater effort at enforcement

Adoptee Rights

The party states that:

- current laws deny millions of adopted adults access to vital records regarding their births. Such access is a basic human right.

The party advocates:

- transparency between adoptees, their mothers and adoptive parents
- immediate and direct access by adult adoptees to all identifying birth, hospital, foster care and adoption agency records and files concerning the adoptee, including the original adoption plans and any contracts that pertain to the adoptee or in which they are mentioned, to assist with researching their genealogy, medical history and the truth regarding the circumstances surrounding their adoptions and, if applicable, their time in foster care
- strict financial penalties when birth/adoption records have been lost or destroyed while under the care of agencies, hospitals, lawyers, etc. that have assumed the responsibility of storing these vital records
- full reparations for historical injustices in adoption.

Discrimination

The party states, among its key values, that:

- it is important to value cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, and to promote the development of respectful relationships across the human spectrum
- the many diverse elements of society should be reflected in our organizations and decision-making bodies, including leadership roles for people who have been traditionally closed out of them

who claim their own rights, yet altogether forget or neglect to carry out their respective duties, are people who build with one hand and destroy with the other. -

156 Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

Subsidiarity

Subsidiarity is the principle that **each element of society should serve its proper purpose, and support others in serving theirs.** One consequence of this principle is that **each individual, and smaller groups of people, should be allowed to make for themselves all the decisions that can responsibly be left to them,** rather than to larger groups or greater authorities. This is **one of the fundamental social teachings of the Church,** since it helps to ensure that each individual is empowered to find his or her own way to God.

Families, Individuals, and Civil Society

It is impossible to promote the dignity of the person without showing concern for the **family, groups, associations, local territorial realities;** in short, for that aggregate of economic, social, cultural, sports-oriented, recreational, professional and political expressions to which people spontaneously give life and which make it possible for them to achieve effective social growth. **This is the realm of civil society...** This network of relationships strengthens the social fabric and constitutes the basis of a true community of persons, making possible the recognition of higher forms of social activity.

The political community is established to be of service to civil society, from which it originates... This vision is challenged by political ideologies of an individualistic nature and those of a totalitarian character, which tend to absorb civil society into the sphere of the State. The political community and civil society are **not equal in the hierarchy of ends.** The political community is essentially at the service of civil society and, in the final analysis, the persons and groups of which civil society is composed.

The State must provide an adequate legal framework for social subjects to engage freely in their different activities and it must be ready to intervene, when necessary and with respect for the principle of subsidiarity, so that the interplay between free associations and democratic life may be directed to the common good. -185, 417, 418 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Subsidiary governments: states, municipalities, territories, & Aborigines

The principle of subsidiarity is opposed to various forms of centralization, bureaucratization, and welfare assistance, and to the unjustified and excessive presence of the State in public mechanisms... Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own

- one of its key values is respect for diversity, and it is committed to establishing relationships that honor diversity; that support the self-definition and self-determination of all people; that consciously confront the barriers of racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, class oppression, ageism, and ableism, and the many ways that our culture and laws separate us from working together
- it supports affirmative action to remedy discrimination, to protect constitutional rights, and to provide equal opportunity under the law

US Afrodescendants

The party states that:

- it condemns any belief in white supremacy, as well as the violence and discrimination borne by people of color in slavery's aftermath, and that both continue to be social problems of paramount significance
- the community of people of African ancestry whose family members were held in chattel slavery in what is now the United States of America have legitimate claims to reparations including monetary compensation for centuries of human rights violations
- as with the Choctaw, the Lakota, the Lambuth, Japanese Americans and the European Jewish community, reparations are now due to address the debt still owed to descendants of enslaved Africans
- it is committed to full and complete reparations to the African American community of this nation for four hundred plus years of genocide, slavery, land-loss, destruction of original identity and the stark disparities which haunt the present, as evidenced in unemployment statistics, substandard and inadequate education, higher levels of mortality including infant and maternal mortality and the practice of mass incarceration
- it recognizes reparations as a debt (not charity)
- while consensus evolves as what would constitute full and complete reparations, it support the following initial steps:
- creation of a claim of action and a right to recover inherited wealth and other profits accumulated from the slave trade for the benefit of a reparations trust fund
- repeal of the slave clauses that survive today in the U.S. Constitution
- restoration of lands stolen through a variety of tactics including: violence, terrorism and the discriminatory access to operating capital that together has robbed black farmers and the broader community
- release of all political prisoners held by the USA
- support of existing Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as well as new and existing Education and Development Funds
- efforts to overcome the effects of over 200 years of racial discrimination
- an end to official support for any remaining symbols of slavery and specifically call for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from all government buildings
- condemnation of racial profiling by law enforcement agencies
- effective enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, including language access to voting
- a national language policy that would encourage all citizens to be fluent in at least two languages
- strengthening of legal services for the poor

Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity

The party states that:

- in keeping with its Key Values of diversity, social justice and feminism, it supports full legal and political equality for all persons regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity, characteristics, and expression
- it affirms the rights of all individuals to freely choose intimate partners, regardless of their sex, gender, or gender identity
- it recognizes the full civil rights of sexual and gender minorities
- it affirms the right of all persons to self-determination with regard to gender identity and sex
- it affirms the right of choosing non-binary and gender fluid identification, and therefore supports the right of individuals to be free from coercion and involuntary assignment of gender or sex
- it opposes all Federal military aid to national governments whose laws result in the death, other harm, or imprisonment of its citizens and residents who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA)
- .it supports adoption of a policy that the U. S. Government recognize all same sex marriages or legal equivalents such as civil unions, in processing visitor and immigration visas
- it opposes security surveillance and covert infiltration of organizations that promote rights for sexual and gender minorities

Freedom of speech; truth & freedom of the press

The party states that:

- independent, critical media are essential to an informed and healthy democracy; that citizens must have ready access to news and information to make responsible informed choices as voters and to carry out their other duties of citizenship
- the 1st Amendment guaranteed freedom of the press because an exchange of ideas and an unfettered debate were considered essential components of a democratic society

initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. -185, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

- it is concerned that today's government policy is designed less to enhance public deliberation than to boost the profitability of media corporations, with the result that mainstream media is increasingly cozy with the economic and political elites whom they might better be investigating
- mergers in the news industry have accelerated, further limiting the spectrum of viewpoints in the mass media

The party advocates:

- strengthening citizens' influence over the broadcast media, breaking up dominant media conglomerates and boosting the number of community and non-profit news outlets
- in view of government interest in controlling the flow of information, guarding constantly against official censorship
- because large corporations are a common source of censorship and privatization of the broadcast airwaves has caused serious deformations of politics and culture, ending privatization of broadcast frequencies and reserving them for the creation of new not-for-profit community broadcasters and for broadband and wifi networks owned and operated by cities, counties and towns which want to deliver this news to their people at reasonable cost
- enacting tough new anti-trust laws for the media, carving up big media conglomerates, and following up with vigorous anti-trust enforcement
- ending commercial broadcasters' free licensed use of the public airwaves, and requiring market-priced leasing of any commercial use of the electromagnetic spectrum. Revenues derived from these license fees should be used to fund the operation of community media. Tax electronic advertising to fund democratic media outlets
- reinstating and strengthening the Fairness Doctrine, to require that holders of broadcast licenses present controversial issues of public importance in an equitable and balanced manner
- establishing substantial public interest obligations for broadcasters and holding them accountable, including revocation of licenses from outlets that fail to satisfy their obligations
- supporting Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) Access Television to ensure that citizens and community organizations have the opportunity to create and present their own programming on cable television
- to expand the role of community radio, expanding licensing of new non-commercial low power FM radio stations
- promoting greater opportunity for women and minority ownership of media outlets
- providing broadband Internet access for all US residents of this country, so that access to information is a right, not a commodity
- efforts to achieve net neutrality, to enable Internet users to access any lawful web content they choose and use any applications they choose, without restrictions or limitations imposed by their Internet service provider or government, except for restrictions that exist to prevent spam e-mail, viruses, and similar content that will harm the provider's network or internet access Democracy
- ensuring free and equal airtime for all ballot-qualified political candidates and parties on radio and television networks and stations
- providing public funding for independent non-profit broadcasters, to ensure high-quality news and cultural programming with the widest possible range of viewpoints
- prohibiting commercial advertising targeted to children less than 12 years old, as well as advertising in public places such as schools, parks, and government buildings
- repealing the Telecommunications Act of 1996
- reducing mailing costs for non-profit and independent magazines and journals, and eliminate them for those that receive less than 20% of their revenues from advertising
- promoting policies to expand investigative reporting on federal, state and local issues
- promoting policies to encourage the people of the United States to watch less television, and instead to spend time with their families, friends and neighbors, and to engage in myriad other constructive, artistic or healthful pursuits

Freedom of Religion

The party states that:

- it believes that quality of life is determined not only by material aspects that can be measured and counted, but also by elements that cannot be quantified.
- it firmly supports the separation of church and state, but also acknowledges the spiritual dimension of life, and honors the cultivation of various types of spiritual experience in our diverse society
- federal, state, and local governments must remain neutral regarding religion

The party advocates:

- support for U.S. constitutional guarantees for freedom of religion, separation of church and state, and assurance that there shall be no religious test for public office
- eliminating federal, state, and local laws that discriminate against particular religious beliefs or non-belief
- ending faith-based initiatives and charitable choice programs, whereby public funds are used to support religious organizations that may not adhere to specified guidelines and standards, including anti-discrimination laws
- ending discriminatory federal, state, and local laws against particular religious beliefs, and non-belief

- eliminating oaths (or affirmations) for holding public office at any level, employment at all government levels, oaths for witnesses in courts, oaths for jury membership, and the oath for citizenship
- prosecution of hate crimes based on religious affiliation or practice
- elimination of displays of religious symbols, monuments, or statements on government buildings, property, websites, money, or documents
- eliminating the politically motivated addition of "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance
- ending faith-based initiatives and charitable choice programs, whereby public funds are used to support religious organizations that do not adhere to specified guidelines and standards, including anti-discrimination laws
- ending school vouchers whereby public money pays for students in religious schools
- ending governmental use of the doctrines of specific religions to define the nature of family, marriage, and the type and character of personal relationships between consenting adults
- revocation of the Congressional charter of the Boy Scouts of America, and for any private organization that practices bigotry against certain religious beliefs and classes of people

Environmental Justice

The party states that:

- environmental justice, which is the crossroads of environmental activism and the civil rights movement, is founded on two fundamental beliefs: that all people have the right to live, work, learn, and play in safe and healthful environments; and that people have the right to influence decisions that affect environmental quality in their communities
- government must ensure the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies

The party advocates:

- implementation of the principle of environmental justice in our practices, policies and laws across the nation, including:
- making "pollution prevention" the preferred strategy for dealing with environmental justice issues, by eliminating environmental threats before they occur and considering cumulative environmental impacts when evaluating risk
- upholding the precautionary principle, requiring polluters to bear the burden of proof in demonstrating the safety of their practices, and expanding the application of the precautionary principle from chemicals and health to land use, waste, energy, food policy and local economic development
- expansion of the public trust doctrine, which holds that government's role is to protect the commons, to include the domains of public health and protection of the natural environment
- assuring non-discriminatory compliance with all environmental, health and safety laws to guarantee equal protection.
- ensuring that rules and regulations are transparent to help communities employ their rights and participate in decision-making
- enforcing corrective justice, ensuring the rights of communities and local agencies to seek judicial redress. Communities and local agencies must not be required to show or prove "intent to discriminate" to achieve redress for problems of disproportionate and/or racist environmental impacts
- supporting, enforcing and strengthening the National Environmental Policy Act

Agencies, States, Municipalities & Territories

The party states that:

- community is the basic unit of green politics because it is personal, value-oriented, and small enough for each member to have an impact
- community involvement is a foundation for public policy
- it does not place its faith in paternalistic big government
- it calls for a global community of communities that recognize our immense diversity, respect individual personal worth and share a global perspective

Hawaii

The party states that:

- since illegal annexation in 1898, the federal and state governments have cheated and neglected the native Hawaiian people
- the 1993, the U.S. "Apology Bill" (U.S. Public Law 103-150) states, in part, "the native Hawaiians have never lost their inherent sovereignty nor their national home base."

The party advocates:

- protecting of sacred and culturally significant native Hawaiian sites, and efforts to nurture native Hawaiian culture
- Kanaka maoli leadership and guardianship in protecting gathering rights, and lobbying the legislature to safeguard these rights without interference
- return of, or fair compensation for, ceded lands
- immediate distribution of Hawaiian Homelands, with government funds allocated for the necessary infrastructure

- prohibition of future sale or diminishments of the Ceded Land Trust
- open dialogue among all residents of Hawai'i on the sovereignty option of full independence, in a form that is fair to both native Hawaiians and other residents of Hawai'i

Puerto Rico

The party states that:

- since Puerto Rico was invaded by the United States in 1898, it has been held by the U.S. in the form of a colony
- after having established "Free Associated State" status for Puerto Rico in 1952, the US has continued to claim that Puerto Rico belongs to, yet is not a part of, the United States, with the result that Puerto Rico has been prevented from taking sovereign decisions to attend to its serious economic and social problems including unemployment, marginalization and poverty

The party advocates:

- the right of Puerto Rican self-determination and independence, in conformity with United Nations Resolution 1514(XV) of 1960
- environmental clean-up and sustainable development of Vieques, the island that was used as a firing range by the U.S. military
- ending recruitment of the youth of Puerto Rico into the U.S. armed forces and their deployment to U.S. wars abroad
- readdressing Puerto Rico's outstanding debt, including review of corporate and other forms of taxation and tax exemptions to help redress economic suffering and the quality of life of the people of Puerto Rico

Community Service

The party advocates:

- to create new opportunities for citizens to serve their communities through non-military community service and challenge young people while encouraging social responsibility by providing them with land and resource management skills, formation of a Civilian Conservation Corps, with national leadership and state and local affiliates, to spearhead efforts to work on the tasks of environmental education, restoration of damaged habitats, reforestation, and cleaning up polluted waterways

The party advocates:

Civil Society

The party states that:

- it is committed to the strengthening of America's civil society, including the many mediating institutions at the community level
- support the ability of cities to establish civilian police review boards to increase understanding between community members and police officers, provide a public forum to air concerns on policy matters and to ensure public oversight and accountability of their local police department



LIBERTARIAN PARTY

The party states that:

- its core belief is respect for the life, liberty and property rights of each individual. This means that no one may initiate force against another, as that violates those natural rights. While many claim adherence to this principle, only libertarians apply the non-aggression axiom to the state.

Civil Rights & Responsibilities

The party states that:

- individuals are inherently free to make choices for themselves and must accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make
- its support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not mean that it necessarily approves or disapproves of those choices. No individual, group, or government may rightly initiate force against any other individual, group, or government
- it rejects the notion that groups have inherent rights. We support the rights of the smallest minority, the individual

Self-Ownership

The party states that:

- individuals own their bodies and have rights over them that other individuals, groups, and governments may not violate
- individuals have the freedom and responsibility to decide what they knowingly and voluntarily consume, and what risks they accept to their own health, finances, safety, or life

Expression and Communication

The party states that:

- it supports full freedom of expression and opposes government censorship, regulation, or control of communications media and technology
- it favors the freedom to engage in or abstain from any religious activities that do not violate the rights of others
- it opposes government actions that either aid or attack any religion

Privacy

The party states that:

- it advocates individual privacy and government transparency, and is committed to ending government's practice of spying on everyone
- it supports the rights recognized by the Fourth Amendment to be secure in our persons, homes, property, and communications
- protection from unreasonable search and seizure should include records held by third parties, such as email, medical, and library records

Personal Relationships

The party states that:

- sexual orientation, preference, gender, or gender identity should have no impact on the government's treatment of individuals, such as in current marriage, child custody, adoption, immigration, or military service laws
- government does not have the authority to define, promote, license, or restrict personal relationships, regardless of the number of participants. Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships
- until such time as the government stops its illegitimate practice of marriage licensing, such licenses must be granted to all consenting adults who apply

Discrimination

The party states that:

- it embraces the concept that all people are born with certain inherent rights
- it rejects the idea that a natural right can ever impose an obligation upon others to fulfill that "right"
- it condemns bigotry as irrational and repugnant
- government should neither deny nor abridge any individual's human right based upon sex, wealth, ethnicity, creed, age, national origin, personal habits, political preference, or sexual orientation
- members of private organizations retain their rights to set whatever standards of association they deem appropriate, and individuals are free to respond with ostracism, boycotts, and other free market solutions



REPUBLICAN PARTY

Civil Liberties

The party states that:

- it regards itself as the party of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution
- the Declaration of Independence sets forth the fundamental precepts of American government: that God bestows certain inalienable rights on every individual, thus producing human equality; that government exists first and foremost to protect those inalienable rights; that man-made law must be consistent with God-given, natural rights; and that if God-given, natural, inalienable rights come in conflict with government, court, or human-granted rights, God-given, natural, inalienable rights always prevail; that there is a moral law recognized as "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God"; and that American government is to operate with the consent of the governed
- it reaffirms the Constitution's fundamental principles: limited government, separation of powers, individual liberty, and the rule of law. We denounce bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, ethnic prejudice, and religious intolerance. It opposes discrimination based on race, sex, religion, creed, disability, or national origin, and supports statutes to end such discrimination
- it believes that merit and hard work should determine advancement in our society, and rejects unfair preferences, quotas, and set-asides as forms of discrimination
- it advocates appointment of judges that will strictly uphold the Constitution, rather than activists who will seek to redefine it

Freedom of speech

The party advocates:

- protection of donors to political parties, as a form of free speech, and a right of uncapped donations
- political speech rights of corporations and advocacy groups

- *banning mandatory funding of candidates through union dues*
- *restoration of FCC authority to pursue broadband providers who violate net neutrality principles or artificially raise prices for access*

The Right to Bear Arms

The party advocates:

- the right of individuals to keep and bear arms under the Second Amendment, and opposes federal registration or licensing of gun owners

Religion & conscience

The party states that religion and morality are the indispensable supports of a free society, and notes that freedom of religion is the first of the freedoms of the Bill of Rights

The party advocates:

- repealing attacks on the charitable status of organizations based on religious beliefs, including adoption agencies and educational institutions
- the right of public display of the 10 Commandments, as a reflection of history and the Judeo-Christian heritage of the country, and prayer at public schools
- conscience rights for health care providers in providing abortions and euthanasia, or making referrals therefor.

Privacy

The party:

- advocates limitation of use of aerial surveillance on US soils, excepting border patrol
- opposes attempts to place tracking devices in our daily lives, or on motor vehicles
- opposes the Foreign Tax Compliance Act requiring reporting of funds held in foreign accounts

Private Property

The party advocates:

- legislation to reverse the Keto court decision extending the governmental right to seize property to cases of public interest that permit seizure and sale to private developers
- strong action by Congress to enforce intellectual property rights against all infringers, foreign and domestic

Human Rights

Gender equity

The party advocates:

- returning to the original intent of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and banning of provisions promoting blurring of gender lines and choices

Housing

The party states that home ownership expands personal liberty, builds communities, and helps Americans create wealth, and acknowledges that home ownership rates have dropped sharply, and that nearly 12 million families spend more than 50 percent of their incomes on rent

The party advocates:

- scaling back the federal role in housing and promoting responsibility on the parts of borrowers and lenders to avoid future taxpayer bailouts, e.g. of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae
- comprehensive review of regulations, especially those dealing the environment, that make it harder to rent, buy, or sell homes.
- ending FHA support for high-income individuals
- ending governmental mandates that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac or banks satisfy lending quotas to specific groups. Discrimination has no place in the housing industry.
- ending undermining of zoning laws under Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulation, which is not proven to end discrimination.

Subsidiarity & Participation

The party states that independent individuals and the institutions they create together- families, schools, congregations, neighborhoods - are the pillars of a free society, that they create spaces where the power of government should not intrude.

The party advocates:

- free speech and rights of civic participation by organizations of citizens
- free speech and rights of civic participation by religious organizations

Agencies, States, Municipalities & Territories

The party advocates:

- leaving decisions concerning minimum wage laws to the states
- requiring Congress to take back its constitutional duty to legislate from the many federal agencies to which the power of legislation has been delegated
- legislation to give full force to the 9th Amendment reservation, in favor of the people, of all rights not assigned by the Constitution to the federal government
- restoration of powers between the federal and state governments in accordance with the assignments made in the Constitution, including federal grant programs covering matters reserved to the states, and consuming one sixth of the federal budget
- turning over environmental regulation for resource production and pollution controls to states
- turning over to states more than 640 million acres of federal land
- in acknowledgement of the special role of the District of Columbia in belonging both to its residents and to country as a whole, full rights for DC's citizens. However, statehood would require Constitutional amendment

Points to Ponder: Rights & Responsibilities; Subsidiarity

Consider asking your local candidates, elected representatives, and the parties the following questions, and discussing their answers with your family, friends, neighbours, coworkers, and fellow parishioners:

Civil Rights & Liberties

As the country enters the COVID recovery phase, concerns have been raised regarding federal and state tracking, retention, and use of private information, including for example information required for vaccine passports.

– to what extent is the collection and use of such information by governments appropriate, and to what extent should it be limited? How important is the right of privacy during a time of perceived emergency such as a pandemic, and to what types of personal information does it apply?

Civic & Individual Responsibilities

It is clear that the nation and states owe their citizens great respect for each of a broad range of human rights. But with rights come responsibilities. What responsibilities do individuals have toward their communities, states, the nation, and the world? For example, to what extent are citizens called to:

- live sustainable lifestyles, for example by conserving energy, avoiding waste, and ensuring that they minimize their impact on future generations?
- participate in society, for example through informed voting, continued engagement with candidates and elected representatives, and keeping up responsibly with the news?
- lend a hand to their neighbours, for example by volunteering at home or within the community, in addition to paying taxes?
- in addition to human and civil rights, many parties speak of things Canadians and others “deserve.” How do the parties determine what citizens do or do not deserve? Do they apply predictable, objective criteria in making such determinations, or can such determinations sometimes seem arbitrary and unfair, or, in the context of elections, opportunistic? What criteria should be applied?
- as lists of our defined rights expand, how do we reconcile conflicts between them? And how should they be enforced, and by whom?

Government and Civil Society

– To what extent, if any, should powers or responsibilities of federal, state, or local governments be expanded, reduced, or redistributed in order to ensure that individuals, public interest groups, and service organizations have opportunities to employ their lives and talents in the service of others, and the common good? To what extent should those powers be shared with non-governmental entities? What roles should other social institutions – for example, the Church, schools, and civic organizations – play in increasing social and civic equity and caring for all?

Social Health Care

- To what extent is it appropriate for federal, state, or local governments to provide taxpayer-supported health care to citizens? Is it appropriate to give any medical services to anyone, any time they ask? If not, how can one properly and even-handedly determine which needs should be met at public expense?
- To what extent is it appropriate to rely on private service providers, including non-profit and community organizations, such as church-supported hospitals, to provide health care services? For example, it can sometimes seem that care for the whole person – including for example spiritual care – is lacking when care is provided by various institutions. Would it be beneficial to make spiritual and other sorts of specialized care, in addition to general health care, available through institutions such as religious organizations? What are the costs and benefits of providing services through the government, private businesses, charities, or other community organizations?

Solidarity

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

Solidarity is found in a commitment to the good of one's neighbour. **The good of one is the good of all**, and the other is as important as the self. Injustice done to another is an injustice that affects everyone. – 193, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Support for the Marginalized and the Vulnerable

Some people are born into economically stable families, receive a fine education, grow up well nourished, or naturally possess great talent. They will certainly not need a proactive state; they need only claim their freedom. Yet the same rule clearly does not apply to a disabled person, to someone born in dire poverty, to those lacking a good education and with little access to adequate health care. **If a society is governed primarily by the criteria of market freedom and efficiency, there is no place for such persons, and fraternity will remain just another vague ideal.** Pope Francis – *Fratelli tutti*, 109

So many needy brothers and sisters are waiting for help, so many who are oppressed are waiting for justice, so many who are unemployed are waiting for a job, so many peoples are waiting for respect. How can it be that even today there are still people dying of hunger? Condemned to illiteracy? Lacking the most basic medical care? Without a roof over their head? **The scenario of poverty can extend indefinitely, if in addition to its traditional forms we think of its newer patterns. These new patterns often affect financially affluent sectors and groups which are nevertheless threatened by despair at the lack of meaning in their lives**, by drug addiction, by fear of abandonment in old age or sickness, by marginalization or social discrimination... – 5 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Disabilities, Mental Health & Addictions

Persons with disabilities are fully human subjects, with rights and duties: “in spite of the limitations and sufferings affecting their bodies and faculties, **they point up more clearly the dignity and greatness of man.**” Persons with disabilities are to be helped to participate in every dimension of family and social life at every level accessible to them and according to their possibilities... **They too need to love and to be loved**, they need tenderness, closeness and intimacy according to their capacities. – 148, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*



DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The Marginalized & Vulnerable

The party states that one in four American adults lives with a disability

The party advocates:

- aggressive enforcement of federal mental health and substance abuse parity laws, to prevent unlawful discrimination by health insurers and care providers
- hiring of more mental health and addictions professionals, especially in rural areas, and expanding access through Medicaid
- expanded support for incarcerated persons suffering mental health or addiction issues
- strict enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- a holistic approach to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and increasing SSI benefits for millions of Americans, eliminating waiting periods for SSDI
- increases federal funding to expand accessible transportation and accessible, integrated, and affordable housing.

Mental Health & Addictions

The party advocates:

- ending over-prescribing of pain medicines
- expanded mental health support for incarcerated persons
- eliminating incarceration for drug use alone and increasing harm reduction interventions and treatment diversion programs

Native American & Tribal Peoples

The party advocates:

- honoring and strengthening US trust obligations to Tribal Nations consistent with US laws and treaties
- working with Tribal Nations on a nation-to-nation basis to empower Indigenous peoples, increase economic development in Tribal Nations, and protect Tribal lands and assets
- a surge in funding to the Indian Health Service to fight COVID, and to help economic recovery
- restorative justice to address boarding school trauma, and increased funding for the Bureau of Indian Education
- substantial funding increases to address Tribal housing needs
- promotion of Indigenous culture and languages
- pursuing environmental and climate justice, including for Indigenous peoples, and will invest in clean water and wastewater infrastructure
- investing in sustainable and regenerative agriculture
- mandatory full funding for the Indian Health Service
- increasing public investment in Tribal broadband infrastructure

Rural Communities

The party advocates:

- doubled investments in community and rural health centers, and expanded mobile health units
- expanding USDA ownership and loan programs, to encourage new and beginning farmers, ranchers, and foresters, including particularly farmers of color
- limiting foreign ownership of farms, to protect families and food security
- preventing states from blocking municipal or co-op, publicly-owned broadband internet; Increase federal support for municipal broadband
- expansion of local and regional markets for family farmers and ranchers
- zero-emissions agriculture industry
- investment in sustainable, low-carbon and organic agriculture
- enforce labor and environmental protections for farm workers
- 10-20-30 funding, to provide 10% of federal funding to communities in which at least 20% of population has lived beneath the poverty line for 30 years or more

Refugees & Newcomers

Indigenous Peoples & Reconciliation

The relationship of Indigenous peoples to their lands and resources **deserves particular attention**, since it is a fundamental expression of their identity. These peoples offer an example of **a life lived in harmony** with the environment that they have come to know well and to preserve. Their extraordinary experience, which is an irreplaceable resource for all humanity, runs the risk of being lost together with the environment from which they originate. – 471, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

The Canadian Catholic Church supports the work of the Truth and Reconciliation commission. **We are called to support thriving Indigenous communities in United States**, rooted in their unique cultures and traditions.

Rural Communities

Looking after the common good means making use of the new opportunities for the redistribution of wealth to the benefit of the underprivileged that until now have been excluded or cast to the sidelines of social and economic progress. **Too often, social services and infrastructure development suffer from neglect in rural areas.** – 299, 300, 363, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

Agricultural labour merits special attention... considering the many problems that need to be met in the context of an ever more globalized economy as well as its growing significance in safeguarding the natural environment. Radical and urgent changes are therefore needed in order to restore to agriculture — and to rural people — their just value as the basis for a healthy economy... – 363, 299 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

Immigrants & Newcomers

Ideally, unnecessary migration ought to be avoided; this entails creating in countries of origin the conditions needed for a dignified life and integral development. Yet **until substantial progress is made in achieving this goal, we are obliged to respect the right of all individuals to find a place that meets their basic needs** and those of their families, and where they can find personal fulfilment. Our response to the arrival of migrating persons can be summarized by four words: **welcome, protect, promote and integrate.** – Pope Francis, *Fratelli tutti*, 129

In the modern world, where there are still grave inequalities between rich countries and poor countries, and where advances in communications quickly reduce distances, **the immigration of people looking for a better life is on the**

The party states that immigrants are essential to our society and our economy, that they enrich American culture, grow the nation's food, care for our loved ones, serve in our armed forces, and provide critical health care services.

The party advocates:

- rescinding the state of emergency declared at the US-Mexico border
- termination of discriminatory travel and immigration bans, and corresponding legislation
- expansion and streamlining of protections for Dreamers and parents of American citizen children
- permitting asylum for victims of gang and domestic violence, as well as LGBTQ+ people who are safe in their home countries
- providing roadmaps to citizenship for millions of undocumented workers, caregivers, students, and children
- expansion of annual visa caps for victims of human trafficking
- end workplace and community immigration raids

GREEN PARTY

Supporting the Marginalized

The Disabled

The party states that:

- the physically and mentally challenged are people who are differently abled from the majority, but who are nevertheless able to live independently
- the mentally ill are people with serious mental problems who often need social support networks
- physically and mentally challenged people have the right to live independently in their communities
- the mentally ill also have the right to live independently, circumscribed only by the limitations of their illness
- these people are their own best advocates in securing their rights and for living in the social and economic mainstream
- current Medicaid policy forces many challenged people to live in costly state-funded institutions, excluding and alienating them from society and the workforce, and denying them the chance to use their potentials
- as a result of diminishing funds for care for the growing number of the mentally ill often result in their homelessness, vagrancy and dependence on short-term crisis facilities, and increases the necessity of placing them in long-term, locked facilities

The party advocates:

- full enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act to enable all people with disabilities to achieve independence and function at the highest possible level
- Government assurance that children with disabilities are provided with the same educational opportunities as those without disabilities
- increased rehabilitation funding so that persons with disabilities can pursue education and training to reach their highest potential
- participation by the differently abled in allocation decisions of state rehabilitation department fund
- ratification of the United Nations Convention on Rights for Persons with Disabilities as well as the Optional Protocol
- funding for in-home support services to allow the differently abled to hire personal care attendants while remaining at home
- adequate funding to support community-based programs that provide out-patient medical services, case management services and counseling programs
- making it easier for the chronically mentally ill to apply for and receive Supplemental Security Income
- mainstreaming the differently abled
- increased teacher training in regard to the needs of differently abled students
- discouragement of stereotyping of the mentally and physically challenged by the entertainment industry and the media
- funding for programs to increase public sensitivity to the needs of the mentally ill and differently abled.

Indigenous Peoples

The party states that:

- it has great respect for Native American cultures, especially their deference for community and the Earth
- it recognizes both the sovereignty of Native American tribal governments and the Federal Government's trust obligation to Native American people. Native American nations are just that — nations — and should be treated in like fashion, with the special circumstance that they are located within the United States
- the federal government is obligated to deal in good faith with Native Americans; honor its treaty obligations; adequately fund programs for the betterment of tribal governments and their people; affirm the religious rights of Native Americans in ceremonies (American Indian Religious Freedom Act); provide funds for innovative economic development initiatives, education and public health programs; and respect land, water and mineral rights within the borders of reservations and traditional lands

increase. These people come from less privileged areas of the earth and their arrival in developed countries is often perceived as a threat to the high levels of well-being achieved thanks to decades of economic growth. In most cases, however, immigrants fill a labour need which would otherwise remain unfilled... **Institutions in host countries must keep careful watch to prevent the spread of the temptation to exploit foreign labourers,** denying them the same rights enjoyed by nationals, rights that are to be guaranteed to all without discrimination. – 297, 298, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

We are called to welcome immigrants and refugees with generosity and good will, as if they were Jesus Christ himself. *Matthew, Chapter 25*

“When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.” 23 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, citing Lev. 19:33-34

The party advocates:

- efforts to broadly reform the Bureau of Indian Affairs to make this vast agency more responsible and more responsive to tribal governments
- just settlement of the claims of the thousands of Native American uranium miners who have suffered and died from radiation exposure, and condemns the stance of secrecy taken by the Atomic Energy Commission during this era and its subsequent claim of government immunity, taken knowingly and immorally at the expense of Native people
- because Native American land and treaty rights often stand as the front line against government and multinational corporate attempts to plunder energy, mineral, timber, fish, and game resources; pollute water, air, and land in the service of the military; expand economically; and consume natural resources, the party advocates legal, political, and grassroots efforts by, and on behalf of, Native Americans to protect their traditions, rights, livelihoods, and sacred spaces
- support for the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, their ways of life, and all other rights of free peoples
- adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN, actively supported by the federal government and by governments worldwide

Local & Rural Communities

The party states that:

- successful local communities nurture everyone of all ages, generate good jobs and housing, and provide public services; creating cities and towns that educate everyone, encourage recreation, and preserve natural and cultural resources; building local governments that protect people from environmental hazards and crime; and motivating citizens to participate in making decisions

The party advocates:

- reforms that give communities more control over their own local economies
- economic decentralization, including community-based economics whose aim is local prosperity and self-sufficiency
- protecting local businesses from the predatory pricing practices of chain and "big box" stores
- incentives for co-operative enterprises, such as consumer co-ops, workers' co-operatives, credit unions and other institutions that help communities develop economic projects
- allowing municipalities to approve or disapprove large economic projects case-by-case based on environmental impacts, local ownership, community reinvestment, wage levels, and working conditions
- allowing communities to set environmental, consumer, human rights, labor, health and safety standards higher than federal or state minimums
- investment in the commons: rebuild infrastructure; improve mass transit
- support for local living wage laws
- establishing local currencies such as Time Dollars, Ithaca Hours and BerkShares, to strengthen local economies
- place of origin labeling.
- corporate "good character" laws, requiring corporations, when applying for a permit, to disclose all violations of law they have committed, and empowering officials to deny permits based on such information

Immigration & Newcomers

The party states that:

- the current controversial influx of immigrants in this country has been largely due to unfair US trade policies. If it were economically possible to provide for their families many would choose to remain in their native countries
- any immigration policy should be seen a way to address all people's humanitarian needs as we undo the damage to local communities and chart a course toward sustainable local economies
- it stands firmly for social justice for all those living in this country regardless of their immigration status
- it accepts as a goal a world in which persons can freely choose to live in and work in any county he or she desires, while recognizing that this would be impractical without reciprocity between nations
- it acknowledges the rights of countries to know the identity of persons seeking to enter, and to limit who can come in to protect public safety
- the U.S. needs a complete overhaul of its immigration laws
- millions of people are living and working in the U.S. with no legal status, making them subject to extreme exploitation and abuse; and immigration raids are terrorizing the immigrant community and breaking up families
- immigration issues must be considered from an international standpoint, taking into account international labor and environmental standards, and human rights

The party advocates:

- recognition that there cannot be any true solutions to the conflicts created by immigration until we are able to organize globally to overcome the power of multinational corporations, which seek to drive down workers' living standards everywhere. International cooperation and solidarity among labor organizations are essential to combat this trend.

- undocumented immigrants who are already residing and working in the United States, and their families, should be granted a legal status which includes the chance to become U.S. citizens. Persons should be excluded from this process only if they present a clear and present danger to other members of our society
- any such path to citizenship should include a recognition of past, uncredited payments into the Social Security System
- permanent border passes to all citizens of Mexico and United States whose identity can be traced and verified
- easily-attainable work permits for citizens of Mexico and United States
- all persons fleeing political, racial, religious, or other types of persecution must be welcomed and given permanent resident status, with particular attention being given to those minorities who are political exiles and refugees and those whose lives would be at risk if asylum is not granted
- family reunification must be a priority in accepting applications for permanent residency
- permanent residency should not be denied based on political views, racial or national origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or any other arbitrary basis



LIBERTARIAN PARTY

The party states that its core belief is "respect for the life, liberty and property rights of each individual. This means that no one may initiate force against another, as that violates those natural rights. While many claim adherence to this principle, only libertarians apply the non-aggression axiom to the state."

The party has published no official statement concerning its positions regarding:

- Supporting the marginalized or vulnerable
- Relations with Indigenous Americans
- Rural communities
- Immigration and newcomers



REPUBLICAN PARTY

The Marginalized & Vulnerable

Disabilities

The party advocates:

- guaranteeing access to education and tools necessary to compete in the mainstream of society
- promoting inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Small Business Administration's certification program for government contracts
- banning non-consensual care for people with disabilities, including newborns, elderly, the infirm
- restoration of the Drug Enforcement Administration's ban on the use of controlled substances for physician-assisted suicide

Native American & Territorial Peoples

The party states that the federal government has a unique government-to-government relationship with and trust responsibility for Indian Tribal Governments, American Indians, and Alaska Natives, and that these obligations have not been sufficiently honored; that ineffective federal programs deprive American Indians of the services they need, and long-term failures threaten to undermine tribal sovereignty itself

The party acknowledges the participation of territorial inhabitants, and seeks to promote its growth

Native Americans

The party advocates:

- economic self-sufficiency for Indians
- rather than one-size-fits-all approaches to tribal relations, expansion of local autonomy where tribal governments seek it, and encouragement of economic opportunities, top-flight education, modernization of the Indian Health Service, and building of essential infrastructure in cooperation with tribes
- equitable participation in federal programs to preserve culture and language

Territorial Peoples

The party advocates:

- infusions of private venture capital for territorial investment
- development of local energy options
- consideration of territorial economic stability in trade agreements with other Pacific nations
- exemptions from harmful economic laws, like minimum wage
- appointment of a commonwealth and territories committee to provide holistic review of federal regulation
- the right of Puerto Rico to be admitted as sovereign state

Rural Communities

The party advocates universal broadband connectivity, particularly through public-private partnerships

Refugees & Newcomers

The party states that:

- it is the natural home for those who come in search of freedom and justice
- the greatest asset of the American economy is the American worker
- it believes that the immigration system must protect American working families and their wages, for citizens and legal immigrants alike

The party advocates:

- building of the wall along the US-Mexico border and protecting all points of entry from illegal immigration
- enforcement requirements for workplace verification of employee status, through the E-verify program
- use of the SAVE program to ensure that no public funds are given to illegal aliens
- increased penalties for repeat immigration offenders
- ending federal funding for illegal 'sanctuary cities'
- reviewing and updating of guest worker visas to protect American jobs
- barring of refugees who cannot be fully vetted, particularly those from homes that have been breeding grounds for terrorism

Points to Ponder: Solidarity

Consider asking your local candidates, elected representatives, and the parties the following questions, and discussing their answers with your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and fellow parishioners:

Mental Health & Addictions

To what extent would further deregulation, decriminalization and legalization of controlled substances give individuals further freedom to “develop their potentialities, become aware of their dignity and prepare to face their unique and individual destiny” (St. John Paul II, On the Hundredth Year (Centesimus Annus) #39), or lead to additional abuse and suffering? How could desirable outcomes be achieved, through efforts of federal, state, and local agencies, educational institutions, and private benevolent groups, and through support for and encouragement of the family?

Refugees & Newcomers

- Catholics are enjoined by both the Old and New Testaments to welcome strangers in their midst, and to look after those in need as they would look after themselves. What can or should be done to ensure that those in need are offered refuge in the United States?
- What is being done, and what, if anything, should further be done to ensure that refugees and newcomers are safe, healthy, and enabled to flourish in the United States?

Rural Communities

- What is being done, and what, if anything, should further be done to ensure vibrant, healthy rural life in America? Of those measures, what should be done at the federal level? By the states? By businesses, residents, and civil associations in rural areas?
- Territorial areas are also of concern. What special circumstances are faced by those living in America’s territories, and how should their needs best be assessed?

Catholic Teaching

The Proper Role of Government

The Church teaches that the proper role of government is to provide a **legal and economic framework in which the common good can flourish**, in order that the people may accomplish their mission; that is, so that the people may use the freedom God has given them to seek the truth and thereby return to Him.

An **authentic democracy** is not merely the result of a formal observation of a set of rules but is the fruit of a **convicted acceptance of the values that inspire democratic procedures**: the dignity of every human person, the respect of human rights, commitment to the common good as the purpose and guiding criterion for political life. **If there is no general consensus on these values, the deepest meaning of democracy is lost** and its stability is compromised.

The Church's social doctrine sees ethical relativism, which maintains that there are no objective or universal criteria for establishing the foundations of a correct hierarchy of values, **as one of the greatest threats** to modern-day democracies. – 407, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Responsibilities of the State include:

- ensuring that all individuals are enabled to achieve their full potential, by maintaining a framework capable of **providing all the material, moral, and spiritual goods necessary for the common good**
- harmonizing the different interests of sectors of society with the requirements of justice, including particularly the **reconciliation of private ownership of goods with the common good**
- **ordering society not only in accordance with the desires of the majority**, but the effective good of all the members of the community, including minorities
- 168, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Stewardship of Office

Public administration at any level — national, regional, community — is to be **oriented towards the service of citizens**, serving as steward of the people's resources, which



DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Role & Purpose of Government

The Party's charter states that, under God:

- it seeks for the nation and hopes for all people individual freedom in the framework of a just society, political freedom in the framework of meaningful participation by all citizens
- bound by the United States Constitution, and aware that a party must be responsive to be worthy of responsibility, its members pledge themselves to open, honest endeavor and to the conduct of public affairs in a manner worthy of a society of free people

Stewardship of Office

Taxes

The party advocates:

- reinstating higher tax brackets for wealthy Americans
- closing tax loopholes and cracking down on overseas tax havens
- requiring investors to pay the same tax rates as workers

Accountability

The party advocates:

- a federal ethics commission to aggressively enforce and strengthen federal ethics laws
- requiring all candidates for federal office to publicly disclose at least 10 years of tax returns
- reinstating merit-based federal contracting processes
- restoration of independent inspectors general
- banning of lobbying by foreign governments

Democratic Reform

To ensure that voting rights are available to all, the party advocates:

- full restoration of the Voting Rights Act
- full implementation of the Help America Vote Act, and accessible polling places
- mandatory, statistically meaningful post-election audits
- professional, well-trained election officials
- measures to ensure the integrity of the 2020 Census, in order to prevent gerrymandering of congressional districts
- increased investment in election technology, including cybersecurity
- a Constitutional amendment to eliminate all private financing of federal elections
- strengthening the public funding system, cracking down on foreign nationals who try to influence elections
- eliminating 'dark money' by requiring disclosure of contributors who contribute for or against candidates or parties
- requiring all candidates for federal office to publicly disclose at least 10 years of tax returns

Peace & International Relations

The party states that

- it will lead with diplomacy as its tool of first resort, and mobilize the nation's allies and partners to meet the tests America cannot meet on its own
- it will stand up to the forces of authoritarianism
- it will speak and act with clarity and purpose on behalf of human rights wherever they are under threat

The party advocates:

- expanding the foreign service
- repairing alliances and reinventing them to advance mutual priorities
- rejoining and reforming WHO, the UN Human Rights Council, UN Population Fund

it must administer **with a view to the common good**.

Tax revenues and public spending take on crucial economic importance for every civil and political community. The goal to be sought is public financing that is itself capable of becoming an instrument of development and solidarity. **Just, efficient and effective public financing will have very positive effects on the economy**, because it will encourage employment growth and sustain business and non-profit activities and help to increase the credibility of the State as the guarantor of systems of social insurance and protection that are designed above all to protect the weakest members of society.

Public spending is directed to the common good when certain fundamental principles are observed: the payment of taxes as part of the duty of solidarity; a reasonable and fair application of taxes; precision and integrity in administering and distributing public resources.

In the redistribution of resources, public spending must observe the principles of solidarity, equality and making use of talents. It must also pay greater attention to families, designating an adequate amount of resources for this purpose. **In the democratic system, political authority is accountable to the people.** 355, 408, 412, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Democratic Reform

Representative bodies must be subjected to effective social control. This control can be carried out **above all in free elections which allow the selection and change of representatives**. The obligation on the part of those elected to give an accounting of their work — which is guaranteed by respecting electoral terms — is a constitutive element of democratic representation.

Among the deformities of the democratic system, political corruption is one of the most serious. If there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political action, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. **A democracy without values easily turns into totalitarianism.** — 406-412, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Cooperation and respect between parties

Political parties have the task of fostering widespread participation and making public responsibilities accessible to all. **Political parties are called to interpret the aspirations of civil society, orienting them towards the common good...** An authentic democracy is not merely the result of a formal observation of a set of rules but is the fruit of a **convicted acceptance of the values that inspire democratic procedures: the dignity of every human person, the respect of human rights, commitment to the common good as the purpose and guiding criterion for political life.** If there is no

- ensure that the US Agency for International Development is fully funded, at about 1% of the federal budget
- making gender equality a key foreign policy priority
- implementing the Women, Peace and Security Act
- incorporating more women in the peace process
- promoting safe access to abortion to women and girls in other countries
- appointing senior leaders to drive and coordinate LGBTQ+ to amplify LGBTQ+ voices around the world
- supporting civil society around the world to promote democracy and the rule of law
- defending freedom of the press
- fighting human trafficking
- working to improve world labour standards, including elimination of child labor, slavery, rights of workers abroad to organize
- international promotion of freedom of conscience and religion

The Global Environment

The party advocates:

- reaffirming US commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals
- rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement, committing the US to capping global warming at 1.5 degrees C.
- reviving and expanding climate related foreign assistance, including aid to the Green Climate Fund

Peacekeeping & Embargoes

The party advocates:

- developing shared responses to non-military threats like disinformation, corruption, and economic coercion
- improving interoperability with allies, and encouraging allies to build up their defense capabilities and take responsibility for regional conflicts
- enhanced cooperation in fisheries management

Refugees & Humanitarian Aid

The party advocates:

- addressing the root causes of forced migration, including violence, poverty, corruption, lack of opportunity, and climate change
- working with Central American and Caribbean governments to strengthen security and prosperity
- mobilizing allies, partners, and international institutions to develop a more robust and effective global public health system
- providing more and better disaster relief

International Finance

The party advocates:

- ensuring the US International Development Finance Corporation is successfully integrated into broader international and private-sector development efforts
- making anti-corruption efforts a foreign policy priority

Trade

The party states that:

- more products in homes, stores, workplaces, and communities should be stamped “Made in America”
- it will expand support for American manufacturing

The party advocates:

- working with allies to shape global trade, so that China is not able to manipulate or distort world markets
- ensuring USMCA creates prosperity for American workers, and strictly enforce compliance with labor and environmental provisions
- enhanced Buy-America requirements in federal, state, and local procurement
- requiring US-made cargo to be carried on US-flagged ships
- disincentivizing off-shore manufacturing, and accelerate on-shoring of critical supply chains
- expansion of tax credits for domestic manufacturing
- putting American workers and unions first in trade agreements
- aggressive action against dumping and currency manipulations by China and others
- protection against theft of US intellectual property rights, and cyberespionage against American companies
- elimination of tax advantages for those who ship jobs overseas

general consensus on these values, the deepest meaning of democracy is lost and its stability is compromised. – 407, 413, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Peace & International relations

Because of the **new bonds of interdependence among global operators**, the traditional defensive measures of States appear to be destined to failure...

The centrality of the human person and the natural inclination of persons and peoples to establish relationships among themselves are the fundamental elements for building a true international community, the ordering of which must aim at guaranteeing the effective universal common good... [T]he unity of the human family is not yet becoming a reality. This is due to obstacles originating in materialistic and nationalistic ideologies that contradict the values of the person integrally considered in all his various dimensions, material and spiritual, individual and community. In particular, any theory or form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable. **The coexistence among nations is based on the same values that should guide relations among human beings: truth, justice, active solidarity and freedom....** – 370, 433, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Global care for the environment

Responsibility for the environment should also find adequate expression on a juridical level. **It is important that the international community draw up uniform rules that will allow States to exercise more effective control over the various activities that have negative effects on the environment and to protect ecosystems** by preventing the risk of accidents... They must be accompanied by a growing sense of responsibility as well as an effective change of mentality and lifestyle. -467, 468 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Peacekeeping & Embargoes

States do not always possess adequate means to provide effectively for their own defence. From this derives **the need and importance of international and regional organizations**, which should be in a position to work together to resolve conflicts and promote peace, re-establishing relationships of mutual trust that make recourse to war unthinkable.

The purpose of sanctions must be clearly defined and the measures adopted must from time to time be objectively evaluated by the competent bodies of the international community as to their effectiveness and their real impact on the civilian population. **The true objective of such measures is open to the way to negotiation and dialogue.** Sanctions must never be used as a means for the direct punishment of

Disarmament & Arms Sales

The party advocates:

- maintaining a strong nuclear deterrent force while reducing over-reliance on nuclear weapons, and reducing new weapon expenditures
- strengthening the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
- maintaining a moratorium on explosive nuclear testing

National Defense & Security

The party advocates:

- ensuring that the US military has no peer
- spending defense dollars wisely, focused on a force that can deter and win the conflicts of the 21st century
- reducing defense spending relative to diplomacy and foreign assistance
- reinstating national security policy processes that advance civilian control based on appropriate military advice
- using force as a last resort, with the informed consent of the people
- negotiating a durable and inclusive settlement in Afghanistan, ensuring that al-Qaeda is not allowed to reconstitute and ISIS is not allowed to grow
- ending support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen, and helping to end the war
- seeking application of diplomacy, intelligence, and law enforcement to resolve conflicts, rather than open-ended military conflicts

Veterans and Personnel

The party advocates:

- rebuilding trust and accountability in the Veterans Administration
- ensuring coverage for all veteran concerns, including reproductive services
- addressing high veteran suicide rates
- ensuring military pay keeps pace with economy
- increase time between deployments

Criminal Justice & Public Safety

The party states that:

- the nation needs to overhaul the criminal justice system from top to bottom. Police brutality is a stain on the soul of our nation. It is unacceptable that more than 1,000 people, a quarter of them Black, have been killed by police every year since 2015
- it also recognizes that all too often, systematic cuts to public services have left police officers on the front lines of responding to social challenges for which they have not been trained, from homelessness to mental health crises to the opioid epidemic

The party advocates:

- significant increases in funding the Legal Services Corporation, for those in need of criminal defense.
- Strict national standards barring police use of chokeholds and permitting deadly force only when necessary as a last resort to prevent an imminent threat to life
- rooting out structural and systemic racism in our criminal justice system and our society, and reimagining public safety.
- ending the war on drugs, and focusing on prevention, decriminalization of marijuana
- reinvigorating community policing approaches
- expanding federal judiciary to keep up with population and crime
- ending use of private businesses to run detention facilities
- deepening commitment to redemption and rehabilitation
- fighting to repeal mandatory sentences
- strengthening police misconduct reviews by the Department of Justice
- re-issuing federal guidance from the Department of Education and the Department of Justice to prevent the disparate disciplinary treatment of children of color and children with disabilities

Guns & Gun Violence

To address the nearly 40,000 deaths each year by firearm in the US, the party advocates:

- making mental health care more available and supporting suicide reduction initiatives
- funding interventions to reduce homicides and gun violence
- ensuring that the Center for Disease Control has sufficient funding to study gun violence as a public health issue
- universal background checks for gun purchases, and abolishment of online gun and ammunition sales
- closing loopholes that allow offenders to buy and possess firearms

an entire population. Economic sanctions in particular are an **instrument to be used with great discernment** and must be subjected to strict legal and ethical criteria. An economic embargo must be of limited duration and cannot be justified when the resulting effects are indiscriminate. – 499, 507, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Displaced Persons & Humanitarian Aid

A particular category of war victim is formed by refugees, forced by combat to flee the places where they habitually live and to seek refuge in foreign countries. **The Church is close to them** not only with her pastoral presence and material support, but also with her commitment to defend their human dignity: Concern for refugees must lead us to **reaffirm and highlight universally recognized human rights**, and to ask that the effective recognition of these rights be guaranteed to refugees.”

It is therefore essential to seek out the causes underlying bellicose conflicts, especially those connected with structural situations of injustice, poverty and exploitation, which require intervention so that they may be removed. For this reason, another name for peace is development. Just as there is a collective responsibility for avoiding war, so too there is a collective responsibility for promoting development. – 158, 498, 515, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Finance

...in the presence of new areas of competition, **the very notion of a national market recedes into the background**. If the creation of what is called the “global capital market” has brought benefits... on the other hand **it has also increased the risk of financial crises**. The financial sector, which has seen the volume of financial transactions far surpass that of real transactions, runs the risk of developing according to a mentality that has only itself as a point of reference, without being connected to the real foundations of the economy.

The more the worldwide economic-financial system reaches high levels of organizational and functional complexity, **all the more priority must be given to the task of regulating** these processes, directing them towards the goal of attaining the common good of the human family. 368-371 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Trade

The Church has time and again called attention to aberrations in the system of international trade, which often, owing to protectionist policies, **discriminates against products coming from poorer countries** and hinders the growth of industrial activity in and the transfer of technology to these countries.

The continuing deterioration in terms of the exchange of raw materials and the widening of the gap between rich and poor

- banning manufacture and sale of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines
- legislation requiring safe gun storage at home
- liability for firearm manufacturers and distributors

Emergency Response

The party advocates:

- ensuring that FEMA has the experienced leadership, staff, and resources necessary to coordinate the federal response to climate change-influenced and other disasters, and is equipped to work in partnership with, and drive federal resources to, state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments.

Terrorism

The party advocates:

- sustaining the effort to defeat ISIA, al-Qaeda, and their affiliates.
- addressing the conditions that allow violent extremism to flourish
- working with partners to prioritize diplomatic, law enforcement, and intelligence tools

Communications Security

The party advocates:

- mobilizing public and private actors to ensure that new communications products and discoveries are bound by law, ethics, and civil liberties
- recommit to open internet, including net neutrality

GREEN PARTY

The Role & Purpose of Government

The party states, among its ten key values, that:

- all human beings must be allowed a say in decisions that affect their lives; no one should be subject to the will of another
- it works to improve public participation in every aspect of government and seek to ensure that our public representatives are fully accountable to the people who elect them.
- it works to create new types of political organizations that expand the process of participatory democracy by directly including citizens in decision-making
- as a matter of right, all persons must have the opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment
- we must consciously confront in ourselves, our organizations, and society at large, any discrimination by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality, religion, or physical or mental ability that denies fair treatment and equal justice under the law

Democratic Reform

The party states that:

- It seeks to rescue that the nation’s proud democratic heritage from the erosion of citizen participation, and to refute ideologies holding that government is intrinsically undesirable and destructive of liberty, and that elected officials should slash spending on social programs in the name of freedom
- it challenges all Americans to think deeply about the meaning of government of the people, by the people, and for the people
- it seeks to repair U.S. electoral system, from how elections are financed, to conducting them in more fair and representative ways, to ensuring accountability and transparency on all levels of government
- We, the People, have a responsibility to participate in self-government through all the means that our Constitution provides

The party advocates:

- enactment of proportional representation voting systems for legislative seats on municipal, county, state and federal levels, so that people are represented in the proportion their views are held in society and are based on dividing seats proportionally within multi-seat districts, compared to the standard U.S. single-seat, winner-take-all districts
- enactment of instant run-off voting (IRV) for chief executive offices like mayor, governor and president and other single-seat elections, to enable voters to rank candidates in their order of preference (1,2,3, etc.)
- full public financing of federal, state and local elections, including free and equal radio and television time on the public airwaves for all ballot-qualified candidates and parties
- prohibiting corporations from spending to influence elections, preferably by constitutional amendment abolishing granting corporations constitutional rights guaranteed to natural persons, or as a condition of receipt of a corporate charter by federal chartering of corporations

countries has prompted the Church to point out **the importance of ethical criteria** that should form the basis of international economic relations: the pursuit of the common good and the universal destination of goods; equity in trade relationships; and attention to the rights and needs of the poor in policies concerning trade and international cooperation.

Economic and social imbalances in the world of work must be addressed by restoring a just hierarchy of values and placing **the human dignity of workers before all else**. – 370, 321, 364 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Disarmament

The Church's social teaching proposes the goal of "general, balanced and controlled disarmament". **The enormous increase in arms represents a grave threat** to stability and peace. The principle of sufficiency, by virtue of which each State may possess only the means necessary for its legitimate defence, must be applied both by States that buy arms and by those that produce and furnish them. Any excessive stockpiling or indiscriminate trading in arms cannot be morally justified.

The doctrine of deterrence gives rise to strong moral reservations. The arms race does not ensure peace. The principle of the non-proliferation of nuclear arms, together with measures of nuclear disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear tests, are intimately interconnected objectives that **must be met as soon as possible** by means of effective controls at the international level. – 508, 509 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Arms Sales

War is a scourge and is never an appropriate way to resolve problems that arise between nations. Appropriate measures are needed to control the production, sale, importation and exportation of small arms and light weapons, armaments that facilitate many outbreaks of violence to occur. The sale and trafficking of such weapons constitute a **serious threat to peace**: these arms kill and are used for the most part in internal and regional conflicts; their ready availability increases both the risk of new conflicts and the intensity of those already underway. The position of States that apply severe controls on the international transfer of heavy arms while they never, or only very rarely, restrict the sale and trafficking of small arms and light weapons is an **unacceptable contradiction**. – 497, 511 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

National Defense & Security

The requirements of legitimate defence justify the existence in States of armed forces, the activity of which should be at the service of peace. Those who defend the

- elimination of all ballot access laws and rules that discriminate against smaller parties and independents, and otherwise place undue burden on the right of citizens to run for office
- abolishment of the Electoral College in favor of direct national election of the president by Instant Runoff Voting
- creation of a new publicly-funded People's Commission on Presidential Debates, and open its presidential debates to all candidates who appear on at least as many ballots as would represent a majority of the Electoral College and who raise enough funds to otherwise qualify for general election public financing
- repealing the federal the non-profit tax exemption status that allows corporations to fund the existing Commission on Presidential Debates and other such exclusive privately controlled debate entities
- lowering the percentage of the presidential popular vote required for a new party's candidate to receive first time General Election public funding from 5% in the previous general election to 1%
- inclusion of an option to vote for a binding None of the Above (NOTA) on all party primary and general election ballots
- the right to initiative, referendum and recall at all levels of government
- a national "right to vote" law to guarantee universal, automatic, permanent voter registration, along with fail-safe voting procedures, so that eligible voters whose names are not on the voter rolls can correct the rolls and vote on the same day
- statehood for the District of Columbia, and ensuring that residents of the District of Columbia have the same rights and representation as all other U.S. citizens
- restoration of full citizenship rights to felons upon completion of their sentence, including the right to vote and to run for elected office
- greater enfranchisement of overseas voters
- strong enforcement of the Federal Voting Rights Act and state voting rights acts
- making Election Day a national holiday and/or weekend elections
- amending the U.S. Constitution to require that all vacancies in the U.S. Senate be filled by election rather than appointment
- development of publicly-owned, open source voting equipment and deployment across the nation to ensure high national standards, performance, transparency and accountability
- the use of verifiable paper ballots
- institution of mandatory automatic random precinct recounts to ensure a high level of accuracy in election results
- establishment of a National Elections Commission with the mandate to establish minimum national election standards and uniformity, partner with state and local election officials to ensure pre-election and post-election accountability for their election plans, require nonpartisan election boards, and depoliticize and professionalize election administration across the United States
- establishment of independent and transparent non-partisan redistricting processes to stop partisan gerrymandering and protect minority rights and representation
- increasing the number of polling places, and increase the pay for poll workers
- Ensuring that all important federal, state and local government documents are on the Internet, especially texts of bills, searchable databases of voting records, draft committee and conference reports, and court decisions
- reinvigorating the independent investigative agencies, such as the General Accounting Office and the inspectors general
- enacting tough new federal anti-bribery and gratuity laws to stop corporations and the wealthy from purchasing government action, and vigorous enforcement of anti-corruption laws by the Justice Department
- prohibiting members of Congress, Governors, state legislators and their staffs from accepting for their own personal benefit any gifts of any amount from lobbyists or the general public
- requiring outside counsel to investigate ethics complaints against members of Congress, and toughening of punishments within the congressional ethics processes for corruption, abuse of power and other wrongdoing
- expansion of revolving-door lobbying "cooling off" periods for members of Congress and their top staff to at least two years
- allowing any member of Congress to require a floor vote on any congressional earmark, to stop wasteful spending

National Debt

The party states that:

- recent presidents have irresponsibly expanded our national debt by trillions of dollars to finance tax cuts for America's wealthiest citizens, war, corporate welfare and bailouts of Wall Street and the automotive industry. This debt and the interest that must be paid on it is not sustainable
- working people and the small business community are bearing a disproportionate amount of the federal debt burden

The party advocates:

- reduce of the national debt by increasing taxes on large corporations, the super-rich and pollution; and decreasing expenditures in some areas, especially for war, armaments and corporate welfare
- opposing the privatization of Social Security
- increased funding for green jobs, Social Security, public housing, higher education, public transportation, environmental protection, renewable energy and energy conservation.

security and freedom of a country, in such a spirit, make an authentic contribution to peace.

Everyone who serves in the armed forces is concretely called to **defend good, truth and justice in the world**. Many are those who, in such circumstances, have sacrificed their lives for these values and in defence of innocent lives. Very significant in this regard is the increasing number of military personnel serving in **multinational forces on humanitarian or peace-keeping missions** promoted by the United Nations.

A war of aggression is intrinsically immoral. In the tragic case where such a war breaks out, leaders of the State that has been attacked have the right and the duty to organize a defence even using the force of arms. If this responsibility justifies the possession of sufficient means to exercise this right to defence, **States still have the obligation to do everything possible to ensure that the conditions of peace exist**, not only within their own territory but throughout the world. -500-502 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Criminal Justice & Public Safety

In order to protect the common good, the lawful public authority must exercise the right and the duty to inflict punishments according to the seriousness of the crimes committed. The State has the **twofold responsibility** to discourage behaviour that is harmful to human rights and the fundamental norms of civil life, and to repair, through the penal system, the disorder created by criminal activity... Punishment does not serve merely the purpose of defending the public order and guaranteeing the safety of persons; it becomes as well **an instrument for the correction of the offender**. There is a **twofold purpose** here. On the one hand, encouraging the reinsertion of the condemned person into society; on the other, fostering a justice that reconciles, **a justice capable of restoring harmony** in social relationships disrupted by the criminal act committed. – 402 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

Taxes

The party states that:

- our current tax system is outrageously unjust. It is riddled with loopholes, subsidies and dodges for corporations and the super-rich
- federal and state taxes must be strongly progressive
- most working people pay too much in taxes compared to corporations, multi-millionaires and billionaires. Many of our biggest and most profitable corporations pay little or no tax
- much investment income is taxed at less than the rate workers pay
- we can afford to cut taxes for most people if we make corporations and the super-rich pay their fair share. Then we can cut them even more when we halt our nation's wasteful spending on wars, weaponry and militarism

The party advocates:

- progressive taxation
- shifting tax from individuals to corporations
- taxing "bads" not "goods"
- taxing unearned income at the same rate as earned income, taxing speculation on Wall Street, and cutting corporate tax giveaways
- comprehensive tax reform to simplify the tax system
- small business, in particular, should not be penalized by a tax system which benefits those who can "work" the legislative tax committees for breaks and subsidies
- substantive and wide-ranging reform of the tax system that helps create jobs, economic efficiencies and innovation within the small business community
- exempting people earning less than \$25,000 per year and families earning less than \$50,000 per year (adjusted for inflation) from the federal and state income taxes
- exempt food, clothing, prescription medications, other necessities and second-hand goods from sales taxes
- ending corporate welfare, including bailouts for Wall Street, the big bank and the automobile industry; subsidies for agribusiness, Export-Import Bank loan guarantees; tax abatements for big box stores; the tax loophole for "carried interest" from private equity and hedge fund managers; tax deductibility for advertising and business entertainment; offshore tax avoidance schemes; giveaways for new sports stadiums and casinos
- a financial transaction tax on trades of stocks, bonds, currency derivatives, and other financial instruments
- blocking financial transactions with tax havens, to stop tax evasion
- decreasing the \$1 million home value cap on the mortgage interest tax deduction for federal income taxes, to reduce the tax subsidy provided to those living in the most expensive homes
- restoring the estate tax
- opposing the privatization of Social Security
- a wealth tax of 0.5% per year on an individual's assets over \$5 million
- establishment of a system of carbon taxes on all fossil fuels, to begin to reflect the real environmental cost of their extraction and use
- application of carbon taxes as far upstream as possible, preferably when possession of the carbon-bearing fuel passes from extraction (for example, coal mine; oil wellhead or tanker; gas wellhead) to the next entity in the supply chain
- eliminating tax subsidies for the oil, gas, coal, nuclear and timber and mining industries
- enacting a system of Community Ground Rent/Land Value Taxation that distinguishes between the socially and privately created wealth of land, by increasing the taxes on the former to retain for society the value that it collectively creates and lowers them on the latter to reward individuals for their initiative and work
- to ensure that prices reflect their true environmental cost, enacting a system of True Cost Pricing (TCP) for goods and services, including immediate or prolonged damage (pollution of air and water) and diminishment of natural resources
- raising taxes on tobacco, alcohol, soda pop and other junk food.

International Relations

The party states, among its ten key values, that:

- it is essential that we develop effective alternatives to society's current patterns of violence
- it will work to demilitarize and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, without being naive about the intentions of other governments
- it recognizes the need for self-defense and the defense of others who are in danger
- it promotes non-violent methods to oppose practices and policies with which we disagree, and will guide the country's actions toward lasting personal, community and global peace
- public health agencies operating abroad should be allowed to offer family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that ask for those services. We oppose our government's habit of cutting family planning funds when those funds go to agencies in foreign countries that give out contraceptive devices, offer advice on abortion, and perform abortions

The party further states that:

- the world and the nation stand poised between the geopolitical conflict of East versus West, marked by the aftermath of the catastrophic events of September 11, 2001; the dangers of global terrorism; the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq; the escalation of conflict in the Middle East; and continued research and development of nuclear weapons and the stockpiling of bio-chemical weapons
- third- and fourth-world economies and resources are being ravaged and the US's economy
- global corporatization, concentrates greater power in the hands of fewer interests who are unaccountable to the vast majority of the world's people threatens job security and other common goods

International Finance and Trade

The party advocates:

- re-formulation of all international trade relations and commerce as currently upheld by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) to protect the labor, human rights, economy, environment and domestic industry of partner and recipient nations so that the growth of local industry and agriculture has the advantage over foreign corporate domination
- re-structure the rules of performance of the IMF/WB to end the debts of recipient nations, prohibit the use of IMF/WB loans to impose structural adjustment programs that emphasize debt service and export-led development at the expense of social needs, and to install strict standards in the IMF/WB that control the use of grants or loans to prevent fraud, misuse, and subversion of funds by recipient governments
- re-writing the rules for investment of corporate capital in projects operated under the IMF/WB to guarantee the rights of the citizens of the nations receiving the investment and their right to public ownership and control of their own resources, including protections for labor's right to organize, create unions and negotiate with management in all countries receiving U.S. investment, and require U.S. corporations that operate in other countries to adhere to the core labor standards established by the International Labor Organization (ILO) Declaration of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- secure the rights of all US states to establish stricter standards for health, safety, and for the environment than those of our national government, and to protect themselves against substandard, imported goods
- prohibiting U.S. corporations from avoiding or evading payment of their taxes by banking abroad or locating their charters offshore
- to restrict the unfettered flow of capital and currency trade, levying the Tobin tax of .05% on cross border currency transactions
- supporting the funding and expansion of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in their missions to educate and train people of less developed nations in initiating local business and economic development, and in providing health care and family planning
- demand that the US government renew and initiate government funding and support for family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that request it
- ending the U.S. government's economic blockade of Cuba, lifting the embargo, and restoring normal diplomatic relations and respect for national sovereignty, and ending U.S. government veto of U.N. resolutions pertaining to Cuba
- imposing a Carbon Fee on imported fossil fuel, in order to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and reduce the impact of fuel importation on American foreign policy and the American economy

Peace and Demilitarization

The party states that:

- under the U.S. Constitution, ratified treaties such as the United Nations Charter hold the authority of U.S. law. Thus the U.S. government is pledged to abide by its principles and guidelines in the conduct of foreign relations and affairs
- the US has an obligation to take disputes with other nations or foreign bodies to the U.N. Security Council and General Assembly forum for negotiation and resolution
- the U.N. and international laws, treaties and conventions that the U.S. has signed are the framework that controls U.S. military actions abroad
- the U.S. must recognize the sovereignty of nation-states and their right of self-determination
- it recognizes and supports the right of the U.N. to intervene in a nation-state engaged in genocidal acts or in its persistent violation and denial of the human rights of an ethnic or religious group within its boundaries, and the right to protect the victims of such acts
- the U.S. is obligated to render military assistance or service under U.N. command to enforce U.N. Security Council resolutions
- to act in a crisis situation, the US is obligated to obtain a UN resolution under the Uniting for Peace Procedure when the U.N. Security Council is stalemated by vetoes
- it seeks permanent repeal of the veto power enjoyed by the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council
- it urges the US government to sign the International Criminal Court agreement and respect the authority of that institution
- the US has no moral or legal right, or any justification, to pre-emptively attack another nation. The only legitimate use of military force is to repel an actual attack on our nation
- it demands repeal – not amendment – of the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) passed by Congress in response to the attacks of September 11, 2001, and opposes any other measure purporting to 'authorize' pre-emptive or illegal military action. In passing the AUMF, Congress abdicated its exclusive authority under the Constitution to declare war

- the Congress further violated the Constitution and betrayed its responsibility to the American people by delegating to the president – one person – virtually dictatorial power to commit acts of war whenever he or she chooses
- it supports abolishment of nuclear weapons, and calls upon the government to:
 - * declare a no-first-strike policy
 - * declare a no-pre-emptive strike policy
 - * declare that the U.S. will never threaten or use a nuclear weapon, regardless of size, on a non-nuclear nation
 - * sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and honor conditions set in the Non-Proliferation Treaty for nuclear nations
 - * reverse our withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and honor its stipulations
 - * end the research, testing and stockpiling of all nuclear weapons of any size
 - * dismantle all nuclear warheads from their missiles
- it supports signature of the Toronto treaty banning the production, stockpiling, use and sale of land mines, and assisting other nations in unearthing and disabling land mines buried in their lands
- it urges an end of US stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons and all research, use, and sale of such weapons; and signing of the convention that will establish the decrease and inspection of all nations' stockpiles of such weapons
- it supports allowing foreign teams to visit the U.S. for verification purposes at least annually
- reduction of the US defense budget to half of its current size
- it supports phasing out all US bases on foreign soil not specifically functioning under a U.N. resolution to keep peace
- it supports repatriation of all US troops stationed abroad, except for the military assigned to protect a U.S. embassy
- closing the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly known as the School of the Americas, in Ft. Benning
- prohibiting all US arms sales to foreign nations and likewise prohibiting grants to impoverished and undemocratic nations unless the money is targeted on domestic, non-military needs
- prohibiting all covert actions used to influence, destabilize or usurp the governments of other nations, or the assassination of, or assistance in any form for the assassination of, foreign government officials

Demilitarization and Exploration of Space

The party:

- recognizes a need for the inspiration and education that the peaceful exploration of Space provides; the need for space-based systems to monitor environmental conditions on Earth; the many advances in space technology that benefit all people on Earth; and the inspiration provided to children by Space exploration can prompt them to pursue math, science, and other important courses of study
- states that the last four U.S.—backed military conflicts have used space-based technology to disrupt the computer and communication systems of sovereign states
- funds required for continuing peaceful Space exploration have been used, instead, for the design, implementation and deployment of wasteful and dangerous space hardware, such as the Strategic Defense Initiative

The party advocates:

- ending of space militarization, and any form of space-based military aggression
- peaceful and sustainable exploration of Space, determined on a case-by-case, mission-specific basis, including the signing of the International Treaty for the Demilitarization of Space
- a reduction of human-staffed space flight due to the high cost and risk for human life and the availability of automated technology that can perform necessary functions in space-based research

Middle East

The party states that:

- its commitments to ecological wisdom, social justice, grass-roots democracy, and non-violence compel it to oppose U.S. government support for "friendly" regimes in the region when those regimes violate human rights, international law, and existing treaties
- it calls on congressional intelligence committees to conduct comprehensive public hearings on the development and deployment of weapons of mass destruction by all states in the Middle East region. U.S. policy should support the removal and/or destruction of all such weapons wherever they are found there.
- it supports the "joint comprehensive plan of action" signed in July, 2015 by Iran and the P5+1 (five permanent members of the UN Security Council: China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States plus Germany), and the European Union, which confirms Iran's status as a zone free of nuclear weapons
- Iran, which has signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, has consistently called for a nuclear-free zone in the entire Middle East
- it supports swift elimination of economic sanctions on Iran and looks to the normalization of relations between Iran and the United States
- in keeping with UN resolutions call for a nuclear-free Middle East, it calls on Israel, the only nuclear power in the Middle East with at least 200 nuclear warheads, to dismantle its nuclear weapons program and sign on to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty

Palestine

The party states that:

- its values oblige it to support popular movements for peace and demilitarization in Israel-Palestine, especially those that reach across the lines of conflict to engage both Palestinians and Israelis of good will
- it affirms the right of self-determination for both Palestinians and Israelis, which precludes the self-determination of one at the expense of the other
- it recognizes the historical and contemporary cultural diversity of Israeli-Palestinian society, including the religious heritage of Jews, Christians, Muslims and others, which is a significant part of the rich cultural legacy of all these peoples and must be respected
- it supports equality before international law rather than appeals to religious faith as the fair basis on which claims to the land of Palestine-Israel are resolved
- Jewish insecurity and fear of non-Jews are understandable in light of Jewish history of horrific oppression in Europe. However, it opposes as both discriminatory and ultimately self-defeating the position that Jews would be fundamentally threatened by the implementation of full rights to Palestinian-Israelis and Palestinian refugees who wish to return to their homes
- without wishing to impose US views on the people of the region, it would turn the U.S. government towards a new policy, which itself recognizes the equality, humanity, and civil rights of Jews, Muslims, Christians, and all others who live in the region, and which seeks to build confidence in prospects for secular democracy. – it reaffirms the right and feasibility of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in Israel
- it rejects U.S. unbalanced financial and military support of Israel while Israel occupies Palestinian lands and maintains an apartheid-like system in both the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Israel toward its non-Jewish citizens. Therefore it calls on the U.S. President and Congress to suspend all military and foreign aid, including loans and grants, to Israel until Israel withdraws from the Occupied Territories, dismantles the separation wall in the Occupied West Bank including East Jerusalem, ends its siege of Gaza and its apartheid-like system both within the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Israel toward its non-Jewish citizens
- it also rejects U.S. political support for Israel and demands that the U.S. government end its veto of Security Council resolutions pertaining to Israel
- decades of continuous diplomatic attempts by the international community have failed to bring about Israel's compliance with international law or respect for basic Palestinian human rights. Despite abundant condemnation of Israel's policies by the UN, International Court of Justice, and all relevant international conventions, the international community of nations has failed to stop Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in Israel and the OPT, while Israeli crimes continue with impunity
- ending institutionalized racism (apartheid) in South Africa demanded an unusual, cooperative action by the entire international community in the form of a boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaign against apartheid South Africa, and that can become the most effective nonviolent means for achieving justice and genuine peace between Palestinians and Israelis
- Palestinian resistance to ongoing dispossession has mainly been nonviolent, including its most basic form—remaining in their homes, on their land; and that while Palestinian armed resistance is legitimate under international law when directed at non-civilian targets
- it believes that only nonviolent resistance will maintain the humanity of Palestinian society, elicit the greatest solidarity from others, and maximize the chance for future reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians

The party advocates:

- joining with the U.N. to secure Israel's complete withdrawal to the 1967 boundaries and its compliance with international law.
- a much stronger and supportive U.S. position with respect to all United Nations, European Union, and Arab League initiatives that seek a negotiated peace
- and immediate U.N.-sponsored, multinational peacekeeping and protection force in the Palestinian territories with the mandate to initiate a conflict-resolution commission
- investigations by the foreign and military affairs committees of the U.S. House and Senate to conduct full hearings on the status of human rights and war crimes in Palestine-Israel, especially violations committed during Israel's 2008-2009 invasion of Gaza ("Operation Cast Lead") as documented in the 2009 "UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict" ("The Goldstone Report") authorized by the UN Commission on Human Rights
- it supports a boycott and divestment strategy (BDS) against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era, which includes pressuring our government to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel, until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law
- it views the proposed two-state solution as neither democratic nor viable in the face of international law, material conditions and "facts on the ground" that now exist in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Therefore it supports a U.S. foreign policy that promotes the creation of one secular, democratic state for Palestinians and Israelis on the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan as the national home of both peoples, with Jerusalem as its capital
- as an integral part of peace negotiations and the transition to a peaceful democracy, it calls for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission whose inaugurating action would be mutual acknowledgement by Israelis and Palestinians that they have the same basic rights, including the right to exist in the same, secure place

Military Service

The party advocates:

- requiring full written disclosure of what is expected of military recruits and what they can expect in return from the government
- recognizing the practice of deceiving prospective service recruits about the truth of their service contract as fraudulent, and sufficient grounds for revoking an enlistment contract

- applying all terms of military service contracts to the government as well as recruits

Veterans

The party states that:

- support for men and women in the armed forces must go far beyond the rhetoric used to discredit the peace movement in the U.S. today
- the dangerous burden of fighting the war in Iraq is disproportionately borne by families of lesser means
- its first priority in foreign policy considerations is to creating a future without war

The party advocates:

- increased pay levels, including monthly combat pay, imminent danger pay and family separation allowances for those risking their lives in combat zones
- better care for the wounded, sick and injured soldiers, and restoration of full funding for veterans' health programs
- full diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental health conditions resulting from service in combat zones, including post-traumatic stress disorder, including increased funding for additional clinics to provide services which now are too often delayed or denied because of over crowding and budget constraints
- honoring all laws concerning time limits on deployments
- to ensure a smooth transition from active military service to civilian life, providing counseling, housing, emergency management, job protection and other support systems
- a comprehensive program to survey Vets and the impacts of Gulf War Syndrome on them and their families and to provide the best possible medical treatment available to minimize the suffering of these men and women and their families
- establishment of a panel of independent medical doctors to examine and oversee military policies regarding forced vaccinations and shots, especially with experimental drugs
- ending the practice of testing experimental medicines and inoculations on service members without their consent
- a new GI Bill, similar to the one that began after World War II and ended in 1981, to provide tuition grants for four years of college or other educational opportunities, low-interest loans for housing or business start-ups, and free medical care for military personnel and their families for ten years following separation from the armed forces
- a transparent and democratic conscientious objection process free of harassment, imprisonment, or deployment to war zones for conscientious objectors
- the right of individuals in the military service to modify or completely separate from military involvement because of conscientious objection

Police & Public Safety

Terrorism

The party states that:

- since the attacks of September 11, 2001, there has been an erosion of freedom in the United States, from many sources and taking many forms, including the war on drugs and widespread imprisonment of nonviolent drug offenders; the increased use of personal identification, surveillance of employees at work, and the growing use of private security forces by corporations; restrictions on the speech of protesters and students; and random traffic stops of persons of color and the commonplace use of roadblocks

The party advocates:

- complete, thorough, impartial, and independent investigation of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, including the role of the administration of George W. Bush, various U.S. based corporations and interests, and other nations and third parties
- repeal of the USA PATRIOT Act, the provisions of which undermine and erode our Bill of Rights and contribute to the destruction of the democratic foundation of checks and balances between the branches of government
- strict enforcement of First Amendment rights of speech, assembly, association and petition, including the right to public, non-violent protest
- ending torture, such as in prisons like Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay and other U.S.-controlled facilities, and ensuring that those guilty of ordering or executing torture are held accountable for violations U.S. and international law
- restoration of the right of habeas corpus, a legal action to obtain relief from illegal detention, and ending indefinite detention without trial
- ending abuse of National Security Letters, which the FBI uses to force Internet service providers, libraries, banks, and credit reporting companies to reveal sensitive information about their patrons
- opposing the death penalty in the United States and worldwide
- strict application of Fourth Amendment protections against illegal search and seizure
- confirming that privacy protections of the 4th amendment extend to the Internet
- supporting the ability of cities to establish civilian police review boards to increase understanding between community members and police officers, provide a public forum to air concerns on policy matters and to ensure public oversight and accountability of their local police department
- stronger legislation, programs, and enforcement to address violence against women and all other forms of violence

- replacement of the term "domestic violence" with the term "violence," because "domestic violence" is not perceived as real violence, which leads to it not being treated legally and practically for the violence that it is
- ending use of the term "sex work" in relation to prostitution. With the increasing conflation of trafficking (the violent and illegal trafficking in women and girls for forced sex) with prostitution, it is impossible to know which is which, and what violence the term "sex work" is masking. No source in existence knows which forms of prostitution comprise forced sex and which comprise free will or choice prostitution.

Corrections

The party states that:

- the United States has the highest incarceration and recidivism rates of industrialized countries, and its criminal justice system in general is too often inhumane, ineffective, and prohibitively expensive
- the current approach to law enforcement places too much emphasis on drug-related and petty, non-violent crimes, and not enough on prosecution of corporate, white collar, and environmental crime
- the poor, the under-educated and various racial and ethnic minorities are overrepresented in the prison population
- negative effects of imprisonment include isolation of prisoners from their communities, media, and education

The party advocates:

- reducing the prison population, investing in rehabilitation, and ending the war on drugs
- prioritizing efforts to prevent violent crime and address the legitimate needs of victims, while addressing the socio-economic root causes of crime and practicing policies that prevent recidivism
- ending the privatization of prison, as profits in such entities are derived from understaffing, which severely reduces the quality of care for inmates
- an end to the "war on drugs", legalization of drugs and treating drug abuse as a health issue
- as alternatives to encouraging and supporting positive approaches to punishment that build hope, responsibility and a sense of belonging, and use of prisons as a last resort, reserved for violent criminals
- handling non-violent offenses through alternative, community-based programs including halfway houses, work-furlough, community service, electronic monitoring, restitution, and rehabilitation programs
- releasing prisoners with diagnosed mental disorders to secure mental health treatment centers, and releasing prisoners who are too old and/or infirm to pose a threat to society to less expensive, community-based facilities
- treating parole as a time of reintegration into the community, not as a continuation of sentence
- providing counseling and other services to the members of a parolee's family, to help them with the changes caused by the parolee's return
- restoring the right to hold public office to felons who have completed their prison sentence
- repealing "three strikes" laws, and restoring judicial discretion in sentencing

Courts & Police

The party advocates:

- sharp restriction of police use of weapons and restraining techniques such as pepper spray, stun belts, tasers and choke holds
- prohibiting property forfeiture and denial of due process for unconvicted suspects
- establishing freedom on bail as a right of all defendants charged with non-violent crimes
- incorporating mental health and social services in bail agreements
- increased compensation for jurors and provision of childcare for those serving jury duty
- protection of victims' rights, including the opportunity for victims to make victim-impact statements and consideration of restitution to victims
- gun control as is contained in the Brady Bill (1993)
- eliminating sale of weapons without background checks
- redirection of funds presently budgeted for the "war on drugs" toward expanded research, education, counseling and treatment
- amending the Controlled Substances Act to reflect that drug use in itself is not a crime
- legalizing the possession, sale, and cultivation of cannabis/marijuana, and striking from the record prior felony convictions for marijuana possession, sale, or cultivation, and amnesty for those who have been incarcerated for the use, sale, or cultivation of marijuana



LIBERTARIAN PARTY

Role & Purpose of Government

The party states that:

- it seeks a world of liberty: a world in which all individuals are sovereign over their own lives and are not forced to sacrifice their values for the benefit of others
- it believes that respect for individual rights is the essential precondition for a free and prosperous world, that force and fraud must be banished from human relationships, and that only through freedom can peace and prosperity be realized
- consequently, it defends each person's right to engage in any activity that is peaceful and honest, and welcome the diversity that freedom brings
- it seeks to build a world in which individuals are free to follow their own dreams in their own ways, without interference from government or any authoritarian power
- it holds that all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their own lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose
- the only proper purpose of government is the protection of individual rights. Government is constitutionally limited so as to prevent the infringement of individual rights by the government itself
- governments throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor
- it denies the right of government to regulate the lives of individuals or seize the fruits of their labor without their consent
- where governments exist, they must not violate the rights of any individual: namely:
 - (1) the right to life, accordingly it supports prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others;
 - (2) the right to liberty of speech and action — accordingly it opposes all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and
 - (3) the right to property — accordingly it opposes all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation

Representative Government & Reform

The party states that:

- it supports election systems that are more representative of the electorate at the federal, state, and local levels
- as private voluntary groups, political parties should be free to establish their own rules for nomination procedures, primaries, and conventions
- it calls for an end to any tax-financed subsidies to candidates or parties and the repeal of all laws that restrict voluntary financing of election campaigns
- it opposes laws that effectively exclude alternative candidates and parties deny ballot access, gerrymander districts, or deny the voters their right to consider all legitimate alternatives
- it advocates initiative, referendum, recall, and repeal when used as popular checks on government
- Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of individual liberty, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to agree to such new governance as to them shall seem most likely to protect their liberty

Government Finance and Spending

The party states that:

- all persons are entitled to keep the fruits of their labor. It calls for the repeal of the income tax, abolishment of the Internal Revenue Service, and all federal programs and services not required under the U.S. Constitution
- it opposes any legal requirements forcing employers to serve as tax collectors
- it supports any initiative to reduce or abolish any tax, and opposes any increase on any tax for any reason
- to the extent possible, it advocates that all public services be funded in a voluntary manner

Government Debt

The party states that:

- government should not incur debt, which burdens future generations without their consent
- it supports passage of a "Balanced Budget Amendment" to the U.S. Constitution, provided that the budget is balanced exclusively by cutting expenditures, and not by raising taxes

Government Employees

The party advocates:

- repeal of any requirement that one must join or pay dues to a union as a condition of government employment
- it advocates replacing defined-benefit pensions with defined contribution plans, as are commonly offered in the private sector, so as not to impose debt on future generations without their consent

Courts & Public Safety

The party states that:

- government force must be limited to the protection of the rights of individuals to life, liberty, and property, and governments must never be permitted to violate these rights
- laws should be limited in their application to violations of the rights of others through force or fraud, or to deliberate actions that place others involuntarily at significant risk of harm

The party advocates:

- repeal of all laws creating “crimes” without victims, such as gambling, the use of drugs for medicinal or recreational purposes, and consensual transactions involving sexual services
- restitution to the victim to the fullest degree possible at the expense of the criminal or the negligent wrongdoer
- preservation of the constitutional rights of the criminally accused, including due process, a speedy trial, legal counsel, trial by jury, and the legal presumption of innocence until proven guilty
- the common-law right of juries to judge not only the facts but also the justice of the law
- ending the prosecutorial practice of “over-charging” in criminal prosecutions so as to avoid jury trials by intimidating defendants into accepting plea bargains
- ending administration of the death penalty by the state

Self-Defense

The party states that:

- the only legitimate use of force is in defense of individual rights — life, liberty, and justly acquired property — against aggression
- this right inheres in the individual, who may agree to be aided by any other individual or group
- it affirms the individual right recognized by the Second Amendment to keep and bear arms, and opposes the prosecution of individuals for exercising their rights of self-defense
- private property owners should be free to establish their own conditions regarding the presence of personal defense weapons on their own property
- it opposes all laws at any level of government restricting, registering, or monitoring the ownership, manufacture, or transfer of firearms or ammunition

International Relations & Defense

The party states that:

- the principle of non-initiation of force should guide the relationships between governments.

National Defense

The party advocates:

- maintenance of a sufficient military to defend the United States against aggression
- avoidance of entangling alliances and abandonment of national attempts to act as policeman for the world
- ending of all forms of compulsory national service.

Internal Security and Individual Rights

The party states that:

- national defense requires that the nation have adequate intelligence to detect and to counter threats to domestic security. This requirement must not take priority over maintaining the civil liberties of our citizens
- the Constitution and Bill of Rights should not be suspended even during time of war. Intelligence agencies that legitimately seek to preserve the security of the nation must be subject to oversight and transparency
- it opposes governmental use of secret classifications to keep from the public information that it should have, especially that which shows that the government has violated the law
- it opposes the use of torture and other cruel and unusual punishments, without exception

International Affairs

The party states that

- American foreign policy should seek an America at peace with the world. Our foreign policy should emphasize defense against attack from abroad and enhance the likelihood of peace by avoiding foreign entanglements
- it would end the current U.S. government policy of foreign intervention, including military and economic aid
- it recognizes the right of all people to resist tyranny and defend themselves and their rights.
- it condemns the use of force, and especially the use of terrorism, against the innocent, regardless of whether such acts are committed by governments or by political or revolutionary groups

Free Trade and Migration

The party states that:

- it supports removal of governmental impediments to free trade
- political freedom and escape from tyranny demand that individuals not be unreasonably constrained by government in the crossing of political boundaries
- economic freedom demands the unrestricted movement of human as well as financial capital across national border



REPUBLICAN PARTY

The proper role of Government

The party states:

- that all are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
- its belief in the Constitution not as a flexible document, but an enduring covenant, and that the constitutional system of limited government, separation of powers, federalism, and the rights of the people must be preserved uncompromised for future generations
- that political and economic freedom are indivisible
- that Government cannot create prosperity, but can limit or destroy it; that prosperity is the product of self-discipline, enterprise, saving and investment by individuals, but it is not an end in itself, but the means by which citizens and their families can maintain their independence from government, raise their children by their own values, practice their faith, and build communities of cooperation and mutual respect

Stewardship of Office

Taxes & Budget

The party states that the federal debt threatens the security, liberty, and independence of the nation

The party advocates:

- a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, with exceptions only for war and legitimate emergencies.
- application of the following test in budgeting: is a proposed expenditure a constitutional federal expense? Has it been effective in the past? Is it so important as to justify borrowing?
- re-writing the tax code anew, to simplify it and to include a common-sense approach
- lowering of any tax rates that penalize thrift or discourage investment, including corporate income tax rates
- elimination of special-interest provisions and loopholes, and corporate welfare
- being mindful of the burdens on families with children, and the impact on an aging population
- because of the vital role of religious organizations, charities, and fraternal benevolent societies in fostering generosity and patriotism, they should not be subject to taxation and donations to them should remain deductible.

Programs

- in order to put them on a secure financial footing, modernizing Medicare and Medicaid, and empowering their participants.
- reviewing all proposals for modernizing Social Security.
- based on the belief that non-cash benefits provided to federal workers cost three times as much as those in the private sector, bringing compensation, including benefits of federal employees into line with compensation in the private sector
- streamlining procedures to fire bad federal workers

Accountability

The party advocates:

- reform of the IRS, to curb internal abuses and improper denial of charitable status to organizations with conservative and pro-life agendas

Democratic Reform

The party states that it:

- opposes the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact and all other schemes to abolish or distort the procedures of the Electoral College
- advocates term limits for Members of Congress, by Constitutional Amendment

- pledges to protect citizens' rights of conscience when they are harassed or denied jobs because of support for candidates or causes
- supports state and local efforts to ensure ballot access for the elderly, the handicapped and all other legitimate voters
- support requirements for proof of citizenship when registering to vote, and secure ID when voting
- advocate voter-verified paper voting trails, for audits and vigilance regarding online credit card contributions to campaigns or candidates, to guard against foreign involvement in elections
- advocates legislation to apportion representatives according to citizen population, rather than resident population

Peace & International Relations

The party states that it:

- wishes for peace, and so insists on strength. It seeks friendship with all peoples and nations, but recognizes and is prepared to deal with evil in the world.
- affirms the wisdom of President Washington's warning against foreign entanglements and unnecessary alliances, and the necessity of senate approval for treaties
- advocates strict compliance with Constitutional Senate ratification of treaties, including retroactively

United Nations

The party advocates:

- continued participation in the UN, contingent on enactment of reforms, including transparency in UN salaries; membership of the Human Rights Council; equitable treatment of Israel
- refusal of participation in UN agreements, including UN conventions on women's rights, children's rights, persons with disabilities, arms trade and UN conference on Environment and Development
- rejection of the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court

Middle East

The party advocates:

- unequivocal support for Israel, including commitment to Israel's security
- isolating Hezbollah and destroying ISIS, and restoring Lebanon's independence
- transition to a post-Assad Syria
- remaining allied with Iraq so long as ISIS survives; supporting the Kurdish people

Asian Pacific

The party advocates:

- North Korean nuclear disarmament
- defense of Taiwan against Chinese attack
- caution in relations with China
- supporting democracy in India, and expanded foreign investment and trade
- caution in continued relations with Pakistan

Europe

The party advocates:

- increased European support for NATO
- cooperation with Russia to end terrorism, support personal liberty, combat nuclear proliferation, and promote trade
- caution with respect to Russian militarism, and repudiation of Russian expansion in Ukraine or elsewhere

Americas

The party advocates:

- continued cooperation with United States and Mexico
- resistance against Marxist dictators in Venezuela and elsewhere
- reconciliation with Cuba following regime change

Africa

The party states that:

- both the United States and its many African allies will become stronger through investment, trade, and promotion of the democratic and free market principles that have brought prosperity around the world. We pledge to be the best partner of all African nations in their pursuit of economic freedom and human rights
- it supports closer cooperation in both military and economic matters with those fighting Boko Haram and al-Shabaab

Global Environment

The party:

- rejects the Paris Climate Accord and Kyoto Agreements

Peacekeeping & Embargoes

The party advocates:

- maintaining and increasing, if appropriate, sanctions against Russia until Ukraine's territory and sovereignty are restored
- greater coordination with NATO defense planning

Refugees & Humanitarian Aid

The party states that:

- foreign aid must serve America's interests first. In today's world of complex challenges, international assistance is a critical tool for advancing America's security and economic interests by preventing conflict, building stability, opening markets for private investment, and responding to suffering and need with the compassion that is at the heart of our country's values
- the advance of political freedom and entrepreneurial capitalism drives economic growth, catalyzes private sector development, and is the only sustainable solution to poverty
- the US needs a radical rethinking of its human rights diplomacy

The party advocates:

- adopting a "whole of government" approach to protect fundamental freedoms globally, to integrate pressing human rights and rule of law issues at every appropriate level of bilateral relationships and strategic decision making
- ensuring that polices reflect the increasing dependency of the health of the U.S. economy and environment, the safety of the nation's food and drug supplies, the security of its investments and personal information in cyberspace, and the stability and security of the oceans on allowing the free flow of news and information and developing an independent judiciary and civil society in countries with repressive governments such as China, Russia, and many nations in the Middle East and Africa

Trade

The party advocates:

- better negotiated trade agreements that put America first, to foster job creation.
- broadening of trade agreements which share American values and commitments to fairness and transparency
- rejection of trade agreements that do not adequately protect US sovereignty or interests, or which have been dishonored
- stricter trade reciprocity, particularly with China

Arms Sales

The party advocates refusal of participation in UN agreements, including UN arms trade agreement

National Defense & Security

The party regards itself as the party of peace through strength. It believes that American exceptionalism -the notion that American ideas and principles give the nation a unique place of moral leadership in the world.

The party advocates:

- rebuilding the US military to the mightiest on earth, with vast superiority over any other nation or group of nations
- nuclear rearmament
- abandoning arms-control treaties
- funding and development of a multi-layered missile defense system
- development of a balanced force to meet diverse threats, including a Reagan-era force that can fight and win two-and one-half wars ranging from counterterrorism to deterring major power aggressors
- responding to cyber attacks with diplomatic, financial, and legal pain, including curtailment of visas, freezing of assets, and criminal prosecution
- preparation for defense against an electromagnetic pulse attack
- promotion of a free and open internet based on principles of free expression and universal values, and support of citizens and companies fighting authoritarian countries to circumvent internet firewalls

Criminal Justice & Public Safety

The party advocates:

- caution in the making of new federal crimes, by statute or regulation, and mens rea requirements
- codification of the Common Law rule of Lenity, requiring courts to interpret unclear statutes in favor of defendants
- proper focusing of federal law enforcement on the protection of federal property and interstate crime, rather than matters best handled by states
- states' rights to enact capital punishment
- competitive acquisition of defense requirements
- continued use of mandatory sentences
- enhancement of victims' rights, including information pertaining to sentencing and parole hearings, access to legal and social services, restitution
- increased educational opportunities for incarcerated offenders

Points to Ponder: Good Government

Consider asking your local candidates, elected representatives, and the parties the following questions, and discussing their answers with your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and fellow parishioners:

The Role and Purpose of Government

Catholics have definite ideas about the purpose of life and therefore the proper roles of civil society, government, and other social institutions.

- Are those ideas shared by most Americans? Does that matter? If so, to what extent?
- Are any values held in common by most Americans? If so, what are they, and how do they inform the proper role of government and other social institutions? For example, what do we owe each other, and what does that mean for government, charities, schools, etc.?
- Is it possible to meaningfully or responsibly define a role for government – and therefore a party's platform – without reference to the proper role of government and other social institutions? Should Catholics look to political parties to share their views on the role and the purpose of government, as informed by their views of the meaning and purpose of life, as a part of their platforms?

Respect & Good Governance

- It is an unfortunate and nearly universal practice of contemporary political parties, in framing their platforms and policy statements, to focus at least as much on what's wrong with the other parties as they do on what's right about themselves. How can we, as citizens and voters, help encourage parties to look for common ground, speak positively about one another, and voice their suggestions for improvement in respectful and collaborative terms?
- We have found, in our conversations with candidates and even the most partisan party adherents, that the greatest number of people agree on far more points of right, wrong, good, and bad than they disagree on. Is it possible for us to start conversations by assessing our points of agreement, and the things we have already achieved, before leaping to differences and deficiencies that might tend to distance us from one another?
- The Church is clear on the conviction that elected leaders should seek to serve the common good, bringing with them to their work deep feelings of humility and deep commitments to wisdom. How can we, as citizens and voters, encourage wisdom, humility and respect in those we elect, rather than selfishness and exclusion?

Democratic Reform

- It is very often the case that party members and candidates – including particularly rank-and-file members and staff members – are very good people, who sacrifice much in order to contribute to a better world. And it seems too seldom that we thank them, or have anything other than criticism to offer. What can we, as individuals, do to thank and support these selfless people, while gently encouraging them to support policies grounded in respect, the common good, and acknowledgement of both the rights and the responsibilities of individuals?

Public-Private Partnerships

Cooperation between government and corporations or other private entities can be instrumental in accomplishing great common projects. On the other hand, unwatched they can become instruments of misuse. President Eisenhower, for example, warned more than sixty years ago that we should be very careful of permitting too much corporate influence on government.

- To what extent should public-private partnerships and lobbying be allowed, for research, infrastructure development, or other purposes, and how should such relationships be governed?
- To what extent should governments, NGOs, or public-private partnerships be allowed or encouraged to engage in social or cultural engineering of other societies or cultures? Under what, if any, circumstances should aid be tied to social objectives such as birth control or ideological control?

Fiscal Responsibility

Prior to the 2020 federal election, the General Accounting Office stated, in its report GAO-20-561 to Congress entitled ***The Nation's Fiscal Health***, that:

Our nation faces serious economic, security, and social challenges at a time when the federal government is highly leveraged in debt by historical norms and is on an unsustainable long-term fiscal path. Federal debt is rising due to an imbalance between spending and revenue that is built into current law and policy. From fiscal year 2001—the last year in which the federal government ran a budget surplus—to fiscal year 2019, debt held by the public increased from \$3.3 trillion to \$16.8 trillion, or from about 32 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) to 79 percent.

The long-term fiscal challenges facing the United States have been exacerbated by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. In response to this unprecedented global crisis, Congress and the administration have taken a series of actions to protect the health and well-being of Americans. The federal government's fiscal response to the COVID-19 pandemic combined with the severe economic contraction from the pandemic have generated a substantial increase in federal debt and are expected to continue to do so, as expenditures increase and tax revenues fall.

Have these issues been addressed? If not, what if anything should be done, and by whom? Can any corrective actions be implemented in ways that serve the common good, while encouraging the full participation of all, based on meaningful, dignified work and equitable incomes?