

# Faithful Christians, Faithful Citizens

*"Every voice matters in the public forum. Every vote counts... We encourage all citizens, particularly Catholics, to embrace their citizenship not merely as a duty and privilege, but as an opportunity meaningfully to participate in building the culture of life." (United States Bishops, "Living the Gospel of Life," n.34)*

Our bishops and the Holy Father have urged us to be faithful and active citizens. As we approach our national elections, Priests for Life has prepared resources to help you to carry out your civic responsibilities and to evaluate candidates and issues in the light of the moral law. You will find these resources at

**[www.priestsforlife.org/elections](http://www.priestsforlife.org/elections)**

(Or you can reach us using the contact information below.)

These resources will help you to

- \* Register to Vote
- \* Learn the positions of candidates on issues
- \* Understand why the Right to Life is the primary election issue
- \* Appreciate how close elections are, and that your vote *does* count
  - \* Mobilize others to vote responsibly
  - \* Vote Early

*"The common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights -- for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture -- is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition of all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination." (Pope John Paul II, Christifideles Laici, 1988).*

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Note: This flier has been approved by legal experts for distribution in Churches. The legal opinion is available from Priests for Life.

## You Wouldn't Even Ask

Fr. Frank Pavone  
National Director, Priests for Life

If a candidate who supported terrorism asked for your vote, would you say, "I disagree with you on terrorism, but where do you stand on other issues?"

I doubt it.

In fact, if a terrorism sympathizer presented him/herself for your vote, you would immediately know that such a position disqualifies the candidate for public office -- no matter how good he or she may be on other issues. The horror of terrorism dwarfs whatever good might be found in the candidate's plan for housing, education, or health care. Regarding those plans, you wouldn't even ask.

So why do so many people say, "This candidate favors legal abortion. I disagree. But I'm voting for this person because she has good ideas about health care (or some other issue)."

Such a position makes no sense whatsoever, unless one is completely blind to the violence of abortion. That, of course, is the problem. But we need only see what abortion looks like, or read descriptions from the abortionists themselves, and the evidence is clear. (*USA Today* refused to sell me space for an ad that quoted abortionists describing their work because the readers would be traumatized *just by the words!*)

Abortion is no less violent than terrorism. Any candidate who says abortion should be kept legal disqualifies him/herself from public service. We need look no further, we need pay *no attention* to what that candidate says on other issues. Support for abortion is enough for us to decide not to vote for such a person.

Pope John Paul II put it this way: "Above all, the common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights -- for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture -- is false and illusory if *the right to life*, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination" (*Christifideles Laici*, 1988).

*False and illusory.* Those are strong and clear words that call for our further reflection.

"I stand for adequate and comprehensive health care." So far, so good. But as soon as you say that a procedure that tears the arms off of little babies is part of "health care," then your understanding of the term "health care" is obviously quite different from the actual meaning of the words. In short, you lose credibility. Your claim to health care is "illusory." It sounds good, but is in fact destructive, because it masks an act of violence.

"My plan for adequate housing will succeed." Fine. But what are houses for, if not for people to live in them? If you allow the killing of the children who would otherwise live in those houses, how am I supposed to get excited by your housing project?

It's easy to get confused by all the arguments in an election year. But if you start by asking where candidates stand on abortion, you can eliminate a lot of other questions you needn't even ask.

For more election related articles and information, visit [www.priestsforlife.org/elections](http://www.priestsforlife.org/elections)