



DIOCESE *of* GAYLORD

September 21, 2024

My Dear People in the Diocese of Gaylord,

As we prepare to exercise our right to vote in the 2024 General Election, please be mindful of the duty of “conscience formation” in light of the teaching of our beloved Catholic faith. There are many resources available to help us, especially the excellent election guidelines from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Michigan Catholic Conference (MCC).

Here are a few of the main issues with moral considerations in this and every election:

- Upholding the Dignity of Human Life
- Providing for the Poor and Vulnerable
- Protecting Religious Liberty and the Freedom to Serve
- Supporting Students, Schools and Parents
- Strengthening Marriages and Families
- Improving Access to Healthcare
- Pursuing Restorative Justice
- Welcoming Immigrants and Refugees
- Caring for Creation and Preserving Natural Resources

I personally like, and commend to you, the closing of the MCC guidance. Here it is in part:

“It can be challenging to compare Catholic teaching with the positions espoused by candidates for office. Neither of the country’s two major political party platforms adhere to the full range of Catholic teaching. Making these voting decisions is sometimes discouraging. But Catholics are called as disciples of Christ to be a light in the world and to guide others toward the righteous path. While it is important to spend time researching the candidates and the issues, putting on the mind of Christ before voting also necessitates stepping away from the noise through the election cycle.

The Church cannot and will not tell individuals which presidential or Michigan-based candidate they should vote for. Such decisions are to be made after forming one’s conscience based on the teachings of the Church and prayerful reflection of candidate positions. It is up to all Catholics and people of goodwill to do the best they can to make wise judgments about the candidates and the issues.”

So...study, pray and discern. May our votes build up God’s kingdom of justice, love and peace.

Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh
Bishop of Gaylord