CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDANCE

As Catholics, we have an obligation not just to vote, but to vote for candidates who do not openly support evil policies. Further, we have an obligation to challenge existing "Catholic" politicians to refrain from advocating for laws that condone intrinsically evil practices.

FOUR NON-NEGOTIABLES

These topics are so fundamental that no Catholic can advocate for or promote them and hope to remain faithful to the Church and to God.

ABORTION

Abortion is the intentional killing of a human being before he or she is born. When confronted with abortion laws and policies that advocate abortion, it is "never licit to obey it, or to take part in a propaganda campaign in favor of such a law, or to vote for it" (*Evangelium Vitae*, Section 73).

The Catholic Church is also crystal clear when it teaches that neither rape nor incest justifies the taking of the life of a totally innocent human being. In the *Letter of Pope John Paul II to Women*, the holy father said, "In these cases the choice to have an abortion always remains a grave sin."

Likewise, the "life of the mother" case never justifies the intentional killing of the preborn child. Pope Pius XII taught in his address to midwives that a physician should do all he can to preserve both lives.

EUTHANASIA

Euthanasia is "an action or omission which of itself and by intention causes death, with the purpose of eliminating all suffering" (*Evangelium Vitae*, Section 65).

The Catholic Church teaches that no person has the right to take his own or anyone else's life: "Whatever its motives and means, direct euthanasia consists in putting an end to the lives of the handicapped, sick, or dying persons. It is morally unacceptable" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Section 2277).

HUMAN EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

The Catholic Church teaches that human beings must be cherished from creation to the moment of death. A human embryo must be "defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed if possible, like any other human being" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Section 2274).

Because human embryonic stem cell research involves the intentional killing of a human being who is to be respected and treated as a person, no reason (no matter how lofty and promising) makes this practice acceptable (*Instruction on Respect for Human Life in Its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation*, 1987).

HUMAN CLONING

Human cloning is a grave modern evil that threatens to radically transform human procreation into human manufacturing. Human cloning is an offense against God's design because it separates love from procreation (Pontifical Academy for Life, Notes on Cloning, 3).

A CANDIDATE'S POSITION

Review each candidate's platform with the Catholic "non-negotiables" in mind. Some candidates compromise on topics on which the Church holds a steadfast position, but it is impossible to be on both sides of the fence.

MAKING YOUR CHOICE

If a candidate respects the dignity of human beings in some circumstances but not in others, he cannot hold the belief that every human being's life is sacred and inviolable. That candidate, no matter how right he is on other topics, should not receive your vote.

Section 73 of Pope John Paul II's *Evangelium Vitae*, which speaks of limiting the harm, is frequently used to justify the "lesser of two evils." But Pope John Paul II did not say it is permissible to vote for a candidate who violates one of the four non-negotiables.

Vote for a candidate who promises to do his best to eliminate the harm—that is, the candidate who promises to do his best to make abortion illegal. The goal, after all, is not to limit abortion; the goal is to do away with it altogether.

MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE?

How can a politician profess the Catholic faith and then advocate the murder of innocent human beings? The Catholic politician who advocates the trampling of rights which our faith considers inviolable is either violating his conscience or does not have a properly formed Catholic conscience. No great leader ever personally opposed a great evil while advocating it.