

## 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.)

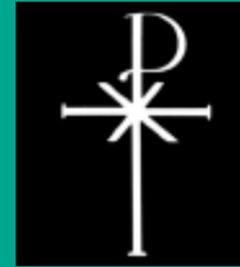
These resources will help you to

- 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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# PRIESTS FOR LIFE

Assisting God's people to respond to the evils of abortion and euthanasia

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

Number 6



Fr. Frank Pavone interviews Archbishop John Foley at the Vatican

## A SEVEN-POINT PLAN FOR CHURCHES

In these final days before our National Elections, here is a seven-point plan of action for your Church. The pro-life movement is counting on you to do your part, which only you can do – to reach the people only you can reach and activate the voters that only you can activate. Thank you in advance!

Our Election website [www.priestsforlife.org/elections](http://www.priestsforlife.org/elections) contains the information you need on all the following projects:

1. Prayer Novena for America: We are in the final part of our national prayer campaign of nine weeks leading up to Election Day. Please sign up and commit to prayers, Masses, Divine Mercy Chaplets, and days of fasting. The intention is that believers will be active in voting, and

*Continued on Page 3*

## QUOTES FROM THE BISHOPS' PRO-LIFE OFFICE AND THE VATICAN ON VOTING AND ON THE NUMBER ONE ISSUE.

Following are quotes taken from interviews that Priests for Life conducted recently with officials of the Vatican and of the USCCB Secretariat for Pro-life Activities.

**Cathy Cleaver-Ruse, Director of Planning and Information, Secretariat for Pro-life Activities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:**

- Q. Is it true to say that our bishops teach that the priority issue is abortion?
- A. “Sure, that’s absolutely true. The Church has taught on this issue of abortion and its immorality since the Apostolic Age. It’s one of our longest standing moral public policy issues and it is not like any other issue. There are no instances where it is morally licit or justifiable. That sets it apart from other issues like capital punishment, like just war theory and many other social issues that are very, very important but don’t have that kind of no exceptions policy. Abortion is one of those fundamental issues. If the very right to life is taken away then no other right matters.”

*Continued on Page 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE:

Literature Distribution.....	2
Prayer Intentions.....	2
Historic TV Series.....	3
<b>Important Election Information.....</b>	<b>4</b>

This newsletter is available by email, along with a bi-weekly column written by Fr. Frank. Subscribe free of charge at [subscribe@priestsforlife.org](mailto:subscribe@priestsforlife.org)

## Quotes from the Bishops...Continued from Page 1

**Richard Doerflinger, Deputy Director, Secretariat for Pro-life Activities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:**

"What the Church has said is that because it is the first gift from a loving God and the condition for all other human goods, all our other rights - life itself has to be a top priority it is the most basic gift and if we lose the right to live we lose everything else. Now within the whole network of issues about life, the first priority has to be the right of each individual at every stage simply to exist at all. To be inviolable. To be free from direct attacks. So the church has said that issues that involve direct attacks on innocent human life - and in our society today, obviously abortion which takes over a million lives in the United States every year - issues like euthanasia for the terminally ill are primary. They are the most basic threats to human life because they are direct attacks on life because they attack innocent life that's not doing anybody else harm or attacking anybody else and because they are attacking life at its most vulnerable and defenseless - the very stages where children and the elderly should be able to expect the respect and protection of their families because it is where they are weakest and most vulnerable.

"What the Bishop's said in their 1998 document Living the Gospel of Life, was that this whole edifice of human goods and ways of enhancing human life are like a house but the other issues that enhance the quality of life for everyone are like the walls of the house and protecting the inviolability of life itself from attack is like the foundation. You cannot have a house anymore if you don't have a foundation. It's meaningless to say we are going to enhance all these qualities of human life and say that human life itself has no inherent worth. Those have to be primary. Everything else grows from that. We promote a consistent ethic of life and at the same time there are priorities, some things are more fundamental than others."

## Quotes from the Vatican

"I consider the right to vote as essential in a democracy. If people neglect that basic right I think it borders on the sinful. We have to take part in our democratic process. If we are fortunate enough to have it we have to take part

in it." — Archbishop John Foley, President, Pontifical Council for Social Communications, Vatican City

"Party loyalty is and must be a secondary value, albeit important, often very important, but nonetheless, secondary. Political parties have the obligation to defend the common good, and where the political party no longer defends the common good, but rather only ideological interests, then the members of that party are obliged to vote against the party. They are obliged." – Bishop Karl Romer, Secretary, Pontifical Council for the Family

"All of these [other fundamental] rights presuppose the right to life. If the right to life is not defended, the defense of all these other rights is useless. It becomes a lie, because it would mean that the defense to the right to work, to society, etc. applies only to some, and not to all." – Bishop Elio Sgreccia, Vice-President, Pontifical Academy for Life

## A WORD ABOUT LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION

As Election Day draws near, many people exercise their right and duty to inform their neighbors about the positions of candidates. Such activity should be encouraged. It flows from the spiritual works of mercy, which include instructing those who do not know things they should know.

This activity may take the form of distributing literature throughout the neighborhood, including to those who come to Mass. It should be noted that citizens have the right to distribute literature on public sidewalks without interference from other citizens, from the Church, or from law enforcement. The right to make one's message heard is unhindered, as long as one is not doing violence, blocking traffic or pedestrian access, or disobeying relevant local ordinances.

Both civil law and the Gospel open the door for citizens to undertake this peaceful, educational activity. The First Amendment is a gift that should be exercised freely. And when people respond to the Lord's call to be active and vocal, we their priests should never squelch those gifts, but rather stir up and encourage them, as we have been ordained to do.

## A Seven-Point Plan...Continued from Page 1

that our nation will embrace a culture of life. For more details, see the "Prayer Campaign" link at: [www.priestsforlife.org/elections](http://www.priestsforlife.org/elections).

2. Homily hints for the final Sundays before the Election: Utilize them and share them with other pastors!

3. Bulletin inserts: We provide text boxes with quotations for use in your bulletin. We also have prepared full-page inserts, such as the one on page four of this newsletter. That insert is available as a pdf file on our website also.

4. Please Publicize our TV Shows on Elections 2004

Our special television programs about political responsibility are now airing nationwide on two major Christian networks, EWTN and Sky Angel. These programs are action-oriented and serve as an excellent way to both inform and activate people.

Please publicize these air times in your bulletin

EWTN – Wednesdays at 5am and Fridays at 10pm ET  
Sky Angel (Angel One) — Mondays at 3:30am;  
Thursdays at 8:30am; Saturdays at 7:30 PM ET

5. Study guide – We have prepared a study guide on the US Bishops' document Living the Gospel of Life, which provides clear teaching about our political responsibility and the issues that matter most. Available online at [www.priestsforlife.org/gospel](http://www.priestsforlife.org/gospel)

6. Alert your people about the positions of the Presidential candidates by referring them to [www.votinginfo.org](http://www.votinginfo.org) – This is a special website that has been prepared in accordance with all the legal guidelines that Churches are required to follow, so that it is safe to promote it, publicize it in the bulletin, and link to it from your parish website.

7. Church Voter Activation Plan – In the final days before the election, call your parishioners and remind them to vote. Encourage early voting. (Our website has information on how far before Election Day each state allows its residents to vote.) If your people need assistance to get to the polls, arrange for car pools or other transportation assistance.

**Sponsor our Newsletter for your diocese or state**

**Call Jerry at (540) 785-4733**

## HISTORIC TV SERIES NOW AIRING!

Spread the word ...and set your VCR for **5am (EDT) on Wednesday or 10pm (EDT) on Friday!**

That's when the next of Priests for Life's six ground-breaking television programs will air on Mother Angelica's EWTN cable network.

**This 6-part television series has the potential to change the political landscape of America for generations to come!**

Using the teachings of our U.S. bishops and the Holy Father, as well as video-taped interviews with Vatican officials and members of the U.S. hierarchy, every single one of these six half-hour programs can empower the Catholic laity. Each program will, in its own unique way, give viewers the resources they need to go to their fellow Catholics, quote to them the teachings of our U.S. bishops, and show them that "the right to life is the fundamental civil rights issue of our day" ... **and that all other rights are based solely on the primary RIGHT TO LIFE!**

Again, the shows air every Wednesday at **5:00 AM (EDT)** ... with a repeat showing every Friday at **10:00 PM (EDT)!**

## A SINGLE STOP FOR ELECTION-RELATED MATERIALS AND INFORMATION

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

**You will find the following and more:**

- **Statements of the Pope and Bishops on Political Responsibility**
- **What Churches and Pastors can do legally regarding Politics**
- **How to vote early (that is, cast your ballot before Election Day)**
- **Homily materials and bulletin inserts**
- **Audio of inspiring election talks**
- **Ways to persuade others to vote pro-life**
- **Positions of Candidates on many issues**

**PRAYER INTENTIONS** You are encouraged to remember the following intentions as you pray the Liturgy of the Hours:

**NOVEMBER INTENTION:** For hospital patients who are unable to communicate, that they may be blessed with the loving companionship of others.

**DECEMBER INTENTION:** For survivors of abortion