



ARCHDIOCESE OF AGAÑA  
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

Oct. 31, 2024

Message by Archbishop Ryan P. Jimenez  
The important responsibility of Catholics to vote  
using their Christian conscience

*“The Church equips its members to address political and social questions by helping them to develop a well-formed conscience. Catholics have a serious and lifelong obligation to form their consciences in accord with human reason and the teaching of the Church. Conscience is not something that allows us to justify doing whatever we want, nor is it a mere “feeling” about what we should or should not do. Rather, conscience is the voice of God resounding in the human heart, revealing the truth to us and calling us to do what is good while shunning what is evil. Conscience always requires serious attempts to make sound moral judgments based on the truths of our faith.” – United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*

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My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In less than a week, Catholics and other citizens will make decisions that will impact the future of our island. Thousands will visit the polls to vote during the General Election on Nov. 5. I remind all Catholics who are registered voters of this very important responsibility. It is part of our moral duty as Catholics to contribute to the common good of our community.

As you make your voices heard, please follow the *VOICE OF GOD* in your souls.

We are One Body in Christ. With deep trust in Our Lord and obedience to his will, we have a responsibility to fully unite ourselves with our Creator. God requires us to conform our voices and actions with his Truth, with his Commandments.

As non-profit groups all members of the Catholic Church in the United States including our Archdiocese of Agaña cannot, by law endorse or oppose any candidate to political office. However, the Church teaches that in making decisions as citizens, all Catholics must become well informed about the issues and candidates and they should firmly root their decisions on Catholic teachings and their Christian conscience.

As the United States bishops stated, “*Conscience is the voice of God resounding in the human heart, revealing the truth to us and calling us to do what is good while shunning what is evil.*”

### **Protecting our unborn among highest priorities**

God commands us to "love one another" (Jn 13:34), especially those who need our care the most. Unborn children in the womb are our most needy and helpless for they cannot protect themselves from harm. Millions have been mercilessly killed through the intrinsic evil of abortion.

Catholics are forbidden to participate in, endorse or support intrinsically evil acts. We must always pray for people involved in abortion and those who support and promote abortion. In most instances, these are good people involved in grave wrong. However, we must not support evil in any way.

The Catholic Review’s helpful article, “A Catholic’s guide to voting” at <https://catholicreview.org/a-catholics-guide-to-voting/> states, “The church does not tell us whom to vote for when we enter the voting booth. It does not endorse an official list of candidates or tell us which party Catholics should join. Instead, Catholics are to use their judgment and follow their consciences as they apply the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and the core faith values to the choices they make in the voting booth.”

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) also has an excellent resource called, “**Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship**” at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/>

The USCCB also explains the Church's teaching on political responsibility, human life, human rights, and justice and peace in the **Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching**. See <https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching>

The document declares a fundamental teaching that all Catholics must unequivocally obey:

#### **“Life and Dignity of the Human Person**

*The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. In our society, human life is under direct attack from [abortion](#) and [euthanasia](#). The value of human life is being threatened by [cloning](#), [embryonic stem cell research](#), and the use of the [death penalty](#). The intentional targeting of civilians in [war](#) or terrorist attacks is always wrong. Catholic teaching also calls on us to work to avoid war. Nations must protect the right to life by finding increasingly effective ways to prevent conflicts and [resolve them by peaceful means](#). We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the [life and dignity](#) of the human person.”*

Despite being a predominantly “Catholic” island, Guam does not seem to be authentically pro-life. Pro-abortion legislation is continually promoted and passed by pro-abortion leaders. The number of pro-life people from our Catholic Church and other religious denominations who courageously speak up for the unborn face increasingly strong opposition by many who hail abortion loudly or who remain silent and look the other way.

In “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship - Part I” the U.S. Bishops’ Reflection on Catholic Teaching and Political Life states:

*“10. What faith teaches about the dignity of the human person, about the sacredness of every human life, and about humanity's strengths and weaknesses helps us see more clearly the same truths that also come to us through the gift of human reason. At the center of these truths is respect for the dignity of every person. This is the core of Catholic moral and social teaching. Because we are people of both faith and reason, it is appropriate and necessary for us to bring this essential truth about human life and dignity to the public square. We are called to practice Christ's commandment to "love one another" (Jn 13:34).”*

As your new shepherd, I share this final, concise guidance: PRAY!

Pray to our Lord to guide you. As you pray, remember that God is our Creator. Because we adore, trust and believe in him, we must bow in complete obedience to his will. We unite our voices with his voice and ask our Lord to infuse our conscience with his Holy Spirit on Nov. 5 and in all moments of our lives.

The peace of God be with you always,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Jimenez', with a small cross symbol to the left.

The Most Reverend Ryan P. Jimenez  
Archbishop of Agaña