



Good Teacher Area Faith Community St. Edward & St. Eloi Catholic Church

Father Todd Petersen

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Parish Secretary: Caren Buysse – 872.6346
Area Faith Website: www.goodteacherafc.com
Director of Religious Education: Shannon Evjen
goodteacherafc@hotmail.com

Deacon: Bruce Bot – 828.7012
Travis Welsh – 829.0986
Jason Myhre – 829.2829

Office Hours: 8:00 am – 12:15 pm 1:15 – 4:00 pm
Monday – Thursday

St. Edward & St. Eloi Email:
cbuyssegoodteacherafc@gmail.com
FORMED: www.formed.org

St. Edward Facebook:
St. Edward Catholic Church
St. Edward Website: www.goodteacherafc.com

Office Mailing Address:
408 N. Washington St.
Minneota, MN 56264

St. Eloi Facebook: St. Eloi Catholic Church
St. Eloi Website: www.goodteacherafc.com

Bulletin Coordinator: Ruth Bot
Bulletin Email: bulletinsteds@gmail.com
Bulletin Info due by Wednesday at 4 pm

Catholic Charities: 1.866.670.5163
Victim's Hotline: 1.800.422.4453
Facebook: One More Time Thrift Store

Sunday, October 30, 2022

The Thirty-first Sunday of Ordinary Time

Monday, October 31

12:30 pm Mass at Convent (Presider's Intention)
5:30 pm Mass at St. Edward (Jim Wambeke)

Tuesday, November 1 – All Saints Day

10:30 am Mass at St. Edward (Vince LeGare)
12:00 pm Mass at Convent (Presider's Intention)
3:00 pm Word & Communion at Apartments
6:00 pm Mass at St. Eloi (For the People)

Wednesday, November 2 – All Souls Day

10:30 am Mass at St. Edward Gr. 1 & 2 (Harvey Timm)
• 10:00 am Confession before Mass
12:00 pm Mass at Convent (For the Pope)
5:30 pm RE Grades 1-5
6:30 pm RE Grades 6-12
6:00 pm Mass at St. Edward (All the faithfully departed)

Thursday, November 3

7:00 am Mass at St. Edward (Allan Schreiber)
• 6:30 am Confession before Mass
12:00 pm Mass at Convent (Wendy Jasurda)
5:00 – 7:00 pm Adoration at St. Edward

Friday, November 4

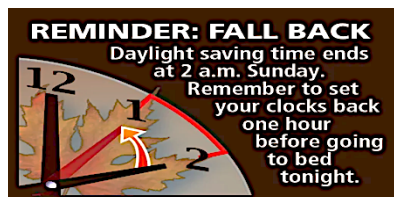
5:45 pm TMIY
7:00 am Mass at St. Edward (Eric Hennen)
12:00 pm Mass at Convent (Louis & Elizabeth Claeys)

Saturday, November 5

12:00 pm Mass at Convent (Ed Buysse)
5:30 pm Mass at St. Edward (Gene Jelen)
• 4:45 pm Confession before Mass

Sunday, November 6 – Daylight Savings Time Ends

8:30 am Mass at St. Edward (For the People)
• 8:00 am Confession before Mass
9:30 – 10:30 am Sunday FIRE – Knights' Hall
10:30 am Mass at St. Eloi (David Maertens)
• 10:00 am Confession before Mass



Dear Parishioners,

Next week, many of us will (hopefully) participate in the elections again. While we will not be voting for a US senator or president, we do have some important elections. We need to remember that our Catholic faith should influence our vote because our faith teaches us truth and morality, not just spirituality.

Since the Dobbs decision returning the issue of abortion to the states, we have witnessed a push for a nationalized abortion policy on the part of one political party to legalize abortion up to (and some might actually include) the moment of birth. Not only our faith but science confirms the humanity of the unborn child, and the intentional killing of the unborn child is wrong. While some 80% of Americans support some limits on abortion (say 16 weeks or limited to certain conditions), one party pushes for unlimited access, for any reason. Worse, this party also often mischaracterizes the pro-life position as opposed to women, supporting forced pregnancy, rape or incest, or desiring to forbid necessary care for women such as D&Cs for women who have miscarried their child, or in the cases of ectopic pregnancies.

As Catholics, we are warned against voting for a candidate who would support the intentional killing of an unborn child. We will be electing someone to the US house, who may be offering a voice on this national policy – is it our voice, the voice of morality?

We also are electing a Governor and state representatives who will have a role in either expanding 'rights to abortion' or placing some sensible limits on it. This seems to be the biggest issue we need to take with us to the polls. We therefore need to know where our candidates stand on this issue. We know that as always, the issues of the economy and law and order are on the ballot, too. We need to get beyond the hype, the partisan politics, and the biased news sources. To help, we are making a statement from the Minnesota Bishops available, but it copies poorly. For more resources, you can also look to the Minnesota Catholic Conference at

<https://www.mncatholic.org/electionresources>. For the Bishop's statement in a more easily readable format, it is the first link on the page. This statement will also be available attached to this bulletin online (goodteacherafc.com).

Tuesday is the Solemnity (and Holy Day of Obligation) of All Saints. See the calendar section for the Mass times. It is a day to remember and honor all the holy men and women who have been graced with eternity with God. They are people of all colors, nations, cultures, and languages. They are workers, thinkers, poets and philosophers, dancers, artists, and every variety of occupation. Families, celibates, reverts, and converts. Included in that number are repentant murderers, occultists, and sinners against the 6th commandment. This day ought to urge us on to

holiness, knowing that sanctity is not the privilege of a select few, but the destiny of everyone who seeks the Lord and does His will.

Wednesday is the feast of All Souls when we pray for all the faithfully departed. We are not the judges and should never presume the Lord's mercy or the state of another's soul. It is a day to pray for all who have died forgiven and are in the state of purification because of either attachment to sin or needed reparation (while forgiven, there is need to repair something at times). We will have a special Mass for the families of all of our recently deceased members on Wednesday evening – everyone is invited.

In Christ,
Fr. Todd

ST. EDWARD SCHOOL NEWS

Principal: Jaci Garvey Secretary: Trudy Banks
jgarvey@stedscatholicschool.com Office: 872.6391

Monday, October 31 – Saints Day Costume Contest

The 2022 St. Edward apparel link is ready. Please share with family & friends!

<https://stedwardapparel2022.itemorder.com/>

Sponsorship of St. Edward School

October 31 – In memory of Sylvester Sanow

November 4 – In memory of Eric Hennen

November 5 – In memory of Bernice Flemming

ST. ELOI

	ACTUAL	BUDGETED	DIFFERENCE
Adult	\$1,085.00	\$2,110.26	(\$1,025.26)
Loose	\$110.00	\$146.15	(\$36.15)
Commodity	\$1,348.22		
Year-to-Date	\$38,059.38	\$35,010.98	\$3,048.40

ST. ELOI LITURGY SCHEDULE

Sunday, November 6

Sacristan:

Servers: Leo Hennen, Xavier & Mark Rabaey

Lector: Bernie DeCock

Eucharistic Minister: Shirley Maeyaert, Sandy Nuytten

Musicians: John Rabaey Family

Offertory Gifts: Aaron & Evelyn family

Ushers: Martin Hennen, Ron Sussner, Tim Van Keulen

ST. EDWARD

	ACTUAL	BUDGETED	DIFFERENCE
Adult	\$1,800.00	\$4,829.92	(\$3,029.92)
Loose	\$123.15	\$153.85	(\$30.70)
Commodity			
Online Giving	\$515.00	*Added to the adult envelope total	
Year-to-Date	\$68,518.13	\$81,832.63	(\$13,314.50)

ST. EDWARD LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday, November 5

Sacristan: Margrit Rabaey

Servers: Elena & Sam Myhre, Gavin Whortenbury

Lector: Fred Rabaey

Eucharistic Minister: Jeff Buysse

Ushers: Jerry Kloos, Jackie Laleman, Chuck Vlaminc, Wayne Wyffels

Sunday, November 6

Sacristan: Diane Hennen

Servers: Elizabeth Garvey, Kylee Loyson

Lector: Teresa Myhre

Eucharistic Minister: Kevin Swedzinski

Usher: Doug Janiszski

SISTERS OF MARY MORNING STAR

St. Eloi Convent Masses at 12:00 pm (Noon)

Call 428.3919 to double-check Mass time.

Vespers: 6:15 pm Adoration: 7:30 – 8:30 pm



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SYMPATHY FROM OUR PARISH

Sister Betty Gits, CSJ passed away on Friday, October 7, 2022, at the Carondelet Village in St. Paul. She will be remembered as a dynamic teacher, gregarious lover of people, gifted storyteller, avid Minnesota Twins fan, and a woman of deep faith. Her funeral was held on Friday, October 28, 2022, in Our Lady of the Presentation Chapel.

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” Revelations 21:4

CCW ONLINE APPAREL

The Council of Catholic Women's online ONLY apparel store through Borch's in Marshall will close on Tuesday, November 1. Please place your order before then if you're interested. The link is:

<https://nccwapparel2022.itemorder.com/>

If you have questions, please call Jan Bot at 401.1167.

CASH RAFFLE TICKETS AVAILABLE

Raffle tickets will cost \$50 with a limited number available (400). There are only about 60 tickets left!



The winnings will be \$100 per week with special winnings on Christmas and Easter of \$1,000 and \$250 on Mother's and Father's Day.

Tickets will be on sale at the SCRIP table after Mass each week through November 20. The first drawing will be Sunday, November 27.

Let's make this raffle a huge success!

THE BOOK OF THE DEAD

Parishes have a custom of giving a place of honor to a book in which members of the parish, community members and visitors write the names of their beloved dead. This practice provides the living with an opportunity for healing and consolation in the face of grief.

The Book of the Dead will be displayed from the solemnity of All Saints until the beginning of Advent. It is left open for people to write the names of their deceased loved ones and for others to read the names, remember, and pray for the repose of their souls. Remembering these men and women who have gone before us, “marked with the sign of faith,” helps us better understand and appreciate our faith in the Christ our risen Lord who conquers sin and death and brings new life to all.

At this time The Book of the Dead will be placed in the back of the church and then will be placed at the front of the church during the month of November. This book is for

anyone who wishes to add the names of their deceased loved ones. During the All Souls Day Mass and the Masses in November, we will pray for those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith.

BOXES OF JOY

During the month of October, we will be collecting items to fill the Box of Joy. These boxes of joy will go to children around the world (mainly Central & South America) that have never received a gift before along with teaching about Jesus and the good news, some evangelizing. There are children in this world that have never heard of Jesus. In the beginning of November, they will be collected, processed and shipped.

Items we are collecting to fill the boxes:

Toys: deflated balls with a pump, small cars and trucks, dolls, stuffed animals, finger puppets

School supplies: colored pencils, crayons, watercolors, colored pens, small notebooks,

Apparel: socks, shorts, T-shirts, flip-flops, hats, sunglasses, shoelaces

Hygiene: brush, sturdy cup, bottle with lid, bar soap, toothbrush, and floss

Accessories: watch, purse, wallet, necklace, headband, barrettes, bracelets, cross, rosary

Items should not be war-related (no toy weapons or soldiers) no liquids or candy, and they must fit in a shoe box. There is a box in the back of church to collect the items. Thank you for your generosity to help children around the world!

to Juanita Bot, 1744 Cty Rd 24, Minneota, MN 56264.

SCHOENSTATT – OCTOBER MEETING

Monday, October 31, from 3:15 – 4:30 pm. The meeting will be held in the Knights' Hall. Please register online at <https://form.jotform.com/222416888648167>

Volunteers are needed to bring snacks for the girls. Please let Jean Callens know which month you would be able to provide snacks.

QUESTION FOR ST. ED'S & ST. ELOI PARISHIONERS

Thanks to all who have let us know that you won't be using your envelopes. Please take a moment and let Caren know if you will NOT need envelopes due to online donating, donating through commodities, or those who donate several payments throughout the year.

If you do not use your envelopes, please let Caren know so plans can be made accordingly.

WOMEN'S FALL RETREAT November 18 – 20

"Light of Life"

All women of St. Edward and St. Eloi are invited to join us on a **Women's Fall Retreat** at the Abbey of the Hills.

Come into the "Light of Life," experiencing God's mercy and grace.

Begins: Friday, Nov. 18, 7 pm – light supper available

Concludes: Sunday, Nov. 20, after lunch

Cost: Freewill offering retreat with non-refundable \$25 deposit to reserve your place.

Registration is required. Register at the Abbey of the Hills website www.abbeyofthehills.org.

For more information, contact Lisa Hennen (605.391.2758) or Dawn Vlaminck (530.4287).

BIRTHRIGHT BABY SHOWER

Thank you to all who have so generously donated to the Birthright Baby Shower in recognition of "Respect Life Month!" It's an amazing show of our support for the parents who chose life for their child. The collection will continue for one more week. Items will be accepted until Friday, November 4.

This was sponsored by St. Edward CCW.

LITURGY MATTERS

We have been given permission to print weekly reflections aimed to instruct the faithful on the issue of "what happens at the Mass." There are 36 reflections which we will begin sharing this week.

Liturgy Matters #1

From the time of the apostles, the Christian community celebrated the rites of Baptism and the Eucharist in obedience to the Lord's commands (Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19). From as early as the second century, these rites were referred to as "Mysteries".

The roots to this lie in the theology of St. Paul, who used the word "mystery" as a key concept in his understanding of what happened in Christ. For St. Paul the central mystery is the Cross of Christ. He does so to express that something was hidden in the cross which we cannot understand without its being revealed.

As he explains in the second chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians, when "the rulers of this age" crucified Christ, they did not understand who he was, for his true identity was hidden. But in fact, the rulers of this age crucified "the Lord of Glory." This is because, as he said, "None of the rulers of this age knew the mystery. If they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory" (1 Corinthians 7-8).

If we use a phrase like "the Mystery of the Eucharist," this does not mean that which cannot be understood about the Eucharist. It means that the Eucharist is a concrete something in which a divine reality is hidden. If we use the word in the singular, "Mystery of the Eucharist," it refers to the rite as a whole. The Eucharist was and is called "The Mysteries," and here the reference is to the various dimensions working together. The gestures, the words, the bread and wine, the members of the assembly in their various roles, all of these are mysteries. In them is hidden the Lord of Glory.

INFORMATION FOR OUR AREA

PRO-LIFE BENEFIT BREAKFAST

A pancake, egg, & sausage breakfast will be held Sunday, October 30, from 8:00 am – 12:30 pm in Holy Redeemer church basement, sponsored by Birthright of Marshall. Volunteers are needed; please call 865.4474. Thank you!

DIOCESAN ANNOUNCEMENT

Anyone who has suffered sexual abuse by a priest or another person involved in church ministry is encouraged to immediately report such abuse to local law enforcement, regardless of when it occurred, if it has not yet been reported. A listing of all county law enforcement and child protection agencies within the 15 counties of the Diocese of New Ulm is posted on the diocesan Web site at <https://www.dnu.org/report-abuse>.

Evangelism

Victims and survivors of abuse by clergy are also encouraged to contact the diocesan victim assistance coordinator or the bishop's delegate in matters pertaining to sexual misconduct at 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073, or by phone at 507-233-5313, for counseling or other assistance in healing.

Toda persona que haya sido víctima de abuso sexual por parte de un miembro del clero u otra persona en el ministerio de la Iglesia debe reportar dicha mala conducta a las autoridades policiales inmediatamente, independientemente de cuando haya sucedido, si aún no ha sido reportado. Un listado de todas las entidades policiales y los servicios de protección al menor dentro de los quince condados de la Diócesis de New Ulm se encuentra en nuestra página de internet, <https://www.dnu.org/report-abuse>.

También se exhorta a las víctimas y sobrevivientes de abuso por parte del clero ponerse en contacto con el Coordinador de asistencia para víctimas o el delegado del Obispo en cuestiones sobre el mal comportamiento sexual 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073, o al 507-233-5313 para consejería u otra ayuda de sanación.

GHEM AMERICAN LEGION

The Ghent American Legion, Engels-Wilson Post #564 has a meeting on Tuesday, November 1, at 7:00 pm.

MINNEOTA AREA MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISER

Merry Christmas Mission Trip Fundraiser - Bless others and support the Minneota Area Mission Trip through this Mary & Martha fundraiser.

Nancy is graciously donating 25% of each sale to the mission trip. Mary & Martha offers faith-based inspirational products for your home, table, children's toys and devotionals.

This event runs from November 1-11. Products will be displayed at the following come and go events:

Wednesday, November 2 at Hope Lutheran from 5-8 pm

Sunday, November 6 at Bethany-Elm from 9-11 am

Sunday, November 6 at Hope Lutheran from 5-7 pm

Or you can shop from the comfort of your home at: www.mymaryandmartha.com/nancykrog

Call Nancy Krog with questions at 530.4630.

ELECTION YEAR STATEMENT from the MN Catholic Bishops

Right relationships

The task of politics is to foster justice and the common good. Despite our many differences, pursuing justice is a cornerstone political value shared by almost all Americans. In Catholic social doctrine, working for justice requires establishing right relationships between persons, where each is given his or her due. Justice requires that all parties embrace certain responsibilities toward each other.

Paraphrasing Pope St. Paul VI, if we want peace, we must work for justice.

Fostering prenatal justice

The recent Dobbs decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, declaring that there is no right to an abortion protected by the U.S. Constitution, has returned the matter of abortion to the political process for deliberation.

Fostering right relationships requires that we determine what we, as a society, owe the unborn child in the womb. At minimum, that is the right an innocent human

being has to life, as well as the protection of the law from being killed. It also requires welcoming the child into the world.

Combating abortion is a pre-eminent concern in public life

As Archbishop José Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, has noted, calling abortion a pre-eminent concern does not mean it is the only concern. Ensuring that every human life is welcomed in life and respected by law does not end at birth. As discussed above, we believe that our Catholic faith leads us to promote an eco-system of public policy that promotes human flourishing for mother and child from conception to natural death.

(There is a flyer in the back of church with more details.)

MARRIAGE RETREAT at Abbey of the Hills

Do Everything in Love – November 11-13

Seth and Teresa Myhre from Minneota, MN along with Deb and Roger Schroeder from Marshall, MN are our featured presenting couples for this relaxing couple's retreat designed to be an insightful & enjoyable weekend together with your spouse.

Couples of all faiths are encouraged to attend this uplifting weekend that will include witness talks; time to socialize and play games; down-time for reflection, rest, and revitalization; plus, opportunities to attend Reconciliation, Adoration and Mass—as well as a “Candlelight Date Night Dinner.”

Begins: Friday, November 11 at 7 p.m.

Concludes: Sunday, November 13 at noon

Cost: Freewill offering with non-refundable \$25 deposit to reserve your space. No one will be turned away for inability to pay. For those who can give, a suggested donation of \$220 will help “pay the gift of peace” forward to help those with limited means.

Registration is required. To register please visit our website at <http://www.abbeyofthehills.org> or call 605-398-9200 email: events@abbeyofthehills.org



SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

- **Baptism, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, Becoming Catholic** – Call the church office: 872.6346
 - **Eucharist to Shut-ins:**
St. Eloi – Sandy Nuytten 829.9690
St. Edward – November 5 Fr. Todd 872.6346
 - **Baptism Prep:** To set up a baptism date, call Caren at the office. Check the church website for Godparent Requirements.
 - **RCIA:** If anyone is interested in joining the Catholic church or learning more about the church, contact Deacon Bruce Bot – 507.828.7012
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Radio Rosary

Oct. 31: In memory of Orville & Conrad Hennen by their family

Nov. 1: In memory of William & Margaret Lanners by Cletus & Lorraine Lanners

Nov. 2: In memory of Rose Mary Baune by Darla & Brian Timmerman

Nov. 3: In memory of Diane Buysse by Ralph & Jenny Dieken

Nov. 4: In memory of Leo, Isabelle, Ralph, Sharon, & Eric Hennen by their family
 Nov. 5: In memory of Lorraine Goblish by Evelyn & Dennis Louwagie
 Nov. 6: In memory of Glenn Appel by Pat Buysse
 To schedule a radio rosary, call Carol Louwagie at 532.6081

PRAYER CALENDAR FOR VOCATIONS – PRIESTS, DEACONS, & SEMINARIANS

Monday, October 31

Fr. Mark Steffl
 Fr. Joe Steinbeisser
 Dcn. Steven Spilman

Wednesday, November 2

Fr. Craig Timmerman
 Fr. Paul Timmerman
 Dcn. Michael Thoennes

Friday, November 4

Fr. Matt Wiering
 Fr. Paul Wolf
 Dcn. Travis Welsh

Sunday, November 6

All men & women whom God is calling to the priesthood or religious life

Tuesday, November 1

Fr. Bernie Steiner
 Fr. Tony Stubeda
 Dcn. Ken Stalboerger

Thursday, November 3

Fr. Paul vandeCrommert
 Fr. Steve Verhelst
 Dcn. Paul Treinen

Saturday, November 5

The women religious in the diocese

"I will set shepherds over my sheep who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed." Jeremiah 23:4

Zacchaeus Meets Jesus

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. Luke 19:5-6 (NIV)

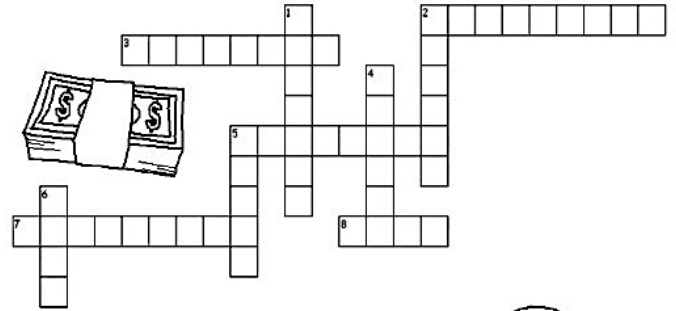
The puzzle is based on Luke 19:1-10 (NIV).



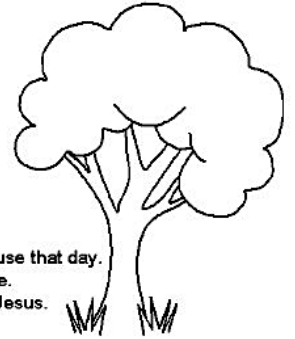
J L P O S M S I N N E R E C T
 E M W R S O Z F J W H M M A A
 R Z E E M C H I E F O S I I X
 I L Z N A N E Y P C W H T U O
 C O M A E L H L L D C O R R L
 H S Z M C L T E X O D R E B H
 O T O L R C W H H W J T E I G
 Z C S H Y B H P Y N T N C N U
 S W B R O E R A T M G F R D E
 T A P A G U V M E M Z N O R S
 D K V J A S S D A U W D W F T
 Y B X E A K D E O P S S D R P
 C O L L E C T O R Q O N L P P
 T Q X J N E C L I M B O Y T I
 H E G I S E E K C X H E R A W

CLIMB	LOST	SAVE	SEEK	JERICHO
CHIEF	WELCOME	HOUSE	WEALTHY	DOWN
TAX	CROWD	TREE	ZACCHAEUS	COLLECTOR
COME	POOR	SINNER	GUEST	SHORT

Zacchaeus Crossword



Word list:
 welcomed short
 salvation four
 collector sinner
 Jericho people
 sycamore seek



Across

- 2. Jesus said this had come to Zacchaeus' house that day.
- 3. Jesus was ___ to come to Zacchaeus' house.
- 5. Zacchaeus climbed this type of tree to see Jesus.
- 7. This was Zacchaeus' occupation: tax ___.
- 8. Jesus came to ___ and to save the lost.

Down

- 1. This was the city where the story took place.
- 2. The crowd was surprised Jesus would go to a house of this type of person.
- 4. There were a lot of these surrounding Jesus.
- 5. Zacchaeus wasn't tall but this.
- 6. Zacchaeus didn't just pay people back but gave them ___ times more.

SALVATION PRAYER

*Lord Jesus,
 I come to you today.
 I am a sinner but you died for me.
 Jesus Christ, come into my life,
 be my Lord and Saviour.
 Take control of my life from
 this day forward.
 Thank you Jesus for
 SAVING ME. Amen.*

*Congratulations!
 Welcome to the Family of God!*



Election Year Statement

From from the Catholic Bishops of Minnesota

Catholics are called to be faithful citizens and to infuse public life with the values necessary to protect human dignity, combat injustice, and promote the common good. Because of this duty, it is necessary that we, your pastors, reflect with you on the state of our public life and the choices Minnesotans face as we go to the polls in a year in which all state legislative and executive officers are up for election.

Right relationships

The task of politics is to foster justice and the common good. Despite our many differences, pursuing justice is a cornerstone political value shared by almost all Americans. In Catholic social doctrine, working for justice requires establishing right relationships between persons, where each is given his or her due. Justice requires that all parties embrace certain responsibilities toward each other. Paraphrasing Pope St. Paul VI, if we want peace, we must work for justice.

There are different types of justice. Commutative justice requires justice in commercial exchange. Distributive justice requires, among other things, that each person and family have access to the material resources they need not just to survive, but also to flourish. Economic justice means building an economic order on right relationships that foster both distributive and commutative justice. Social justice requires creating those conditions for all social actors, including schools, faith communities, and the government, to fulfill their social responsibilities.

Criminal justice should be built on criminals taking responsibility for the injustice perpetrated on victims, and society working through the penal system to rehabilitate and then restore offenders to the community. Other types of justice include racial justice, environmental justice, and legal justice.

When there is injustice in society, that is, when society fails to establish right relationships, the state can step in to help right what is wrong and to repair, in some measure, what is broken. That is a task of prudence, which is why it is important to carefully choose our elected leaders who, often at great sacrifice, take on the responsibility of making those decisions. They should be wise and virtuous. And voters, informed by Catholic social doctrine, should consider how candidates will work for the various types of justice across a spectrum of issues, including education, public safety, tax policy, migration, creation stewardship, and healthcare.

This year, in a special way, we call on Catholics to consider how a candidate will work for prenatal justice as a pre-eminent consideration in his or her voting calculus. Prenatal justice is not simply being anti-abortion, though that is the foundation of the prolife witness. Prenatal justice means establishing right relationships between the mother and the unborn child in her womb, between society and the unborn child, and between society and the mother and father of the unborn child. As life begins in the womb, so must justice. As we discuss below, there are responsibilities entailed by each set of relationships and good public policies that follow.

Fostering prenatal justice

The recent Dobbs decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, declaring that there is no right to an abortion protected by the U.S. Constitution, has returned the matter of abortion to the political process for deliberation.

Will states allow the continued killing of innocent human life? What are our responsibilities to the child and the mother? How do we foster right relationships between them and the broader society for the common good? These are questions elected officials must answer as they work to foster prenatal justice.

It would be a dereliction of duty for us as bishops to pretend as though the abortion question was not a focus of Minnesota's election discourse this year, especially as Dobbs has changed the abortion landscape in this nation. And as Pope Francis teaches, we cannot stay silent when nearly a million unborn lives are being cast aside in our country year after year through abortion.[1]

Right now in Minnesota, the situation is troubling: in spite of the fact that scientific inquiry has definitively determined that human life begins at conception[2], a woman can procure an abortion for almost any reason at any stage of pregnancy up till birth. To put this in perspective, in 2021 there were 222 abortions involving babies older than 20 weeks. Almost half of all abortions are paid for with taxpayer funds. Our laws allow an 11-year-old girl to get an abortion without even one parent knowing. There is no requirement in force that a licensed physician perform an abortion. And abortion proponents, including elected officials, are working proactively to shut down pregnancy resource centers.

Fostering right relationships requires that we determine what we, as a society, owe the unborn child in the womb. At minimum, that is the right an innocent human being has to life, as well as the protection of the law from being killed. It also requires welcoming the child into the world.

Part of that welcome is establishing right relationships between mother, father, and child. We must encourage marriage and family stability, and clarify that abortion is not about bodily autonomy and freedom, but about the life of another human being for whom the father and mother are responsible.[3]

It follows that if we are intent on protecting innocent children from abortion, and ensuring that parents meet their obligations, then, as a society, we must step in to ensure that mothers and fathers are supported when necessary due to economic hardship.[4] This means, among other things, policies that fund: nutritional supports for expectant mothers; adequate healthcare coverage during and after pregnancy for both mother and child; childcare assistance; housing supports; early learning assistance programs; and parenting education. Enacting paid family and caregiver leave laws would help people retain work and care for their newborns. Reconsidering whether our adoption policies are unreasonably burdened by excessive costs or barriers to participation

is an imperative. We also need to continue to support pregnancy resource centers through programs such as the Positive Alternatives grants that help them walk with women in need during crisis pregnancies.

Even beyond the pregnancy and years of early childhood development, we have a social duty to remove barriers to marriage, having children, and being able to raise them well. In short, we need to make family economic security the principal consideration in budget and tax policy discussions. By raising the family to the top of our state’s policy priorities, we can help restore the family to its proper position as the foundational building block of society and the place where children can flourish.[5] In doing so, Minnesota can become the best place to bring children into the world.[6] And even if our state maintains a permissive abortion policy, putting families first will hopefully weaken demand for abortions.

In sum, working for prenatal justice transcends the false binary of pitting mother against child. Our public policy can foster right relationships and support the work of fulfilling our responsibilities to each other. It is in the fulfillment of our duties, even in difficult situations, that we grow in virtue and character and realize the best chance of true happiness.

Faithful citizenship

We encourage Catholics and other advocates for human life to step proactively into the political debate both winsomely and charitably, and to use creatively all peaceable levers of political power to prudently, and incrementally, transform our cities and our state into places that respect the human rights of the unborn by welcoming them in life and protecting them by law.

Part of that work is voting. A representative democracy such as ours requires that the citizenry elect good people into office and continue to inform their elected representatives of their views on important issues.

Unfortunately, many candidates are openly advocating for Minnesota to become an abortion sanctuary state with taxpayer-funded abortion on demand, as well as pledging to deregulate the abortion industry by removing safeguards put in place to protect women from medical malpractice or to protect teenage girls from ill-considered abortions. Far too many others, moreover, although professing to be pro-life on paper, are going out of their way to avoid talking about Minnesota’s future as a potential abortion sanctuary or what should be done to limit abortion, preferring to avoid the subject altogether.

In this situation, it is incumbent on the Catholic laity to be especially proactive in speaking to candidates about prenatal justice and supporting legislative and judicial efforts to limit abortion. The effect of proactive engagement with candidates, not just in this election cycle but also during their term of office, will give courage and political will to those who support pro-life policies in principle, and moderate the pro-abortion extremism of other candidates and elected officials. Catholics cannot expect just laws will be enacted without their faithful citizenship and building relationships with legislators. That is what faithful citizenship is all about.

Combating abortion is a pre-eminent concern in public life

As Archbishop José Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, has noted, calling abortion a pre-eminent concern does not mean it is the only concern.[7] Ensuring that every human life is welcomed in life and respected by law does not end at birth. As discussed above, we believe that our Catholic faith leads us to promote an eco-system of public policy that promotes human flourishing for mother and child from conception to natural death.

What we seek to emphasize here is that, just as the bishops of the United States have identified the ending of abortion as a preeminent policy priority[8], so too should Catholic voters make protecting innocent human life and stopping abortion extremism a preeminent consideration in our voting calculus.[9]



[1] “[R]egarding abortion, the point when human life begins is not a religious belief but a scientific fact -- a fact on which there is clear agreement even among leading abortion advocates. Second, the sanctity of human life is not merely Catholic doctrine but part of humanity’s global ethical heritage, and our nation’s founding principle.” (USCCB, “Living the Gospel of Life,” 23). [2] Mark Pattison, “Pope Francis ‘has our backs’ on pro-life cause, says archbishop,” Catholic News Service, Jan. 24, 2020, available at <https://catholicnews.com/pope-francis-has-our-backs-on-pro-life-cause-says-archbishop/>.

[3] We understand that sometimes pregnancy can be the result of sexual coercion and rape. These are difficult situations that require care and sensitivity. We do not condone abortion in these instances, but we recognize that fostering justice may mean society has a special responsibility to care for the mother and child, including economic supports or facilitating adoption. Our parishes will help women in these difficult situations.

[4] Though the overwhelming majority of abortions are procured because the mother does not wish to have a child, almost one in five are reportedly procured specifically due to economic hardship. [5] See the Minnesota Catholic Conference “Families First Project” (familiesfirstproject.com). Policies such as a permanent state child tax credit are the cornerstone of this initiative.

[6] It should be emphasized that working for policies that promote human flourishing does not absolve anyone from the responsibility of working for an end to the state-sanctioned killing of innocent human life. “[B]eing ‘right’ in such matters can never excuse a wrong choice regarding direct attacks on innocent human life. Indeed, the failure to protect and defend life in its most vulnerable stages renders suspect any claims to the ‘rightness’ of positions in other matters affecting the poorest and least powerful of the human community.” (USCCB, “Living the Gospel of Life,” 22).

[7] “A political commitment to a single isolated aspect of the Church’s social doctrine does not exhaust one’s responsibility towards the common good.” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Pertaining to the Participation of Catholics in Political Life, 4, 2002).

[8] “Pope speaks to U.S. bishops about pro-life issues, transgender ideology,” Catholic News Service, Jan. 16, 2020, available at <https://www.osvnews.com/2020/01/16/pope-speaks-to-u-s-bishops-about-pro-life-issues-transgender-ideology/>. (Note Pope Francis’s agreement with U.S. bishops that abortion is a pre-eminent social and political concern).

[9] “[A] well-formed Christian conscience does not permit one to vote for a political program or an individual law which contradicts the fundamental contents of faith and morals.” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Pertaining to the Participation of Catholics in Political Life, 4, 2002).

