



DIOCESE OF  
SAN JOSE

Office of the Bishop

October 16, 2020

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

With regard to the election, I wish to point out the bishops' teaching regarding "intrinsic evils" when voting. I point us to the following two paragraphs from the US bishops' document, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*:

"Catholics often face **difficult choices** about how to vote. This is why it is so important to vote according to a well-formed conscience that perceives the proper relationship among moral goods. A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who favors a policy promoting an intrinsically evil act, such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, deliberately subjecting workers or the poor to subhuman living conditions, redefining marriage in ways that violate its essential meaning, or racist behavior, if the voter's intent is to support that position. In such cases, a Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in grave evil. At the same time, a voter should not use a candidate's opposition to an intrinsic evil to justify indifference or inattentiveness to other important moral issues involving human life and dignity.

"There may be times when a Catholic who rejects a candidate's unacceptable position even on policies promoting an **intrinsically evil act** may reasonably decide to vote for that candidate for other morally grave reasons. Voting in this way would be permissible only for truly grave moral reasons, not to advance narrow interests or partisan preferences or to ignore a fundamental moral evil" (*FCFC* 34-35).

Be assured of my prayers for you as you participate in the democratic process. May we work to build a more just and peaceful world!

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Oscar Cantu  
Bishop of San Jose