



Indiana Catholic Conference

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To: Pastors and parish leadership
From: Glenn Tebbe, Executive Director
RE: Guidelines for election activities
Date: August 13, 2018

The Election and the campaign season seem to be continual; there has not been the typical break between Primary Election in May and Labor Day; the T.V and radio ads are as frequent now as near an election. As past experience has proven, pastors and church leaders will be called upon by zealous and well-meaning parishioners to engage in the election process. Having faithful Catholics take part in the election is to be encouraged. However, there is a proper role for the laity and for the institutional Church.

To provide support and guidance, the Indiana Catholic Conference makes available “Guidelines for Pastors and Parishes on Lobbying and Electioneering” which outlines the areas of acceptable and prohibited activities. These are formatted for easy reference as questions arise in the coming weeks. However, as the Guidelines state, if you have further questions, please contact us for assistance. In addition to the copy herewith, the Guidelines are available at the Conference website www.indianacc.org ; for handy reference you can use this link [Guidelines for Pastors and Parishes on Lobbying and Electioneering](#)

It is fairly well understood that the Church cannot endorse candidates and that issues advocacy is permissible. While explicit candidate materials are easily identified, problems develop when advocacy crosses the lines to partisan or candidate support in disguise. Another problem comes with materials that claim to be Catholic but either distort or only provide one dimension of Catholic teaching. Rather than distributing these, and in response to those who seek guidance, the Conference recommends that you utilize the USCCB materials available on the website www.faithfulcitizenship.org . While the Faithful Citizenship materials were developed for the 2016 election, it is still applicable and useful in preparing for the 2018 election. **The policy in Indiana Dioceses is that no material should be distributed at the parish unless it is published by the USCCB, ICC or the respective diocese.**

I encourage you to help parishioners fulfill their civic duty. The issues are important and participation in the election is a duty. The Faithful Citizenship resources can help people better understand the issues and their role. Because no candidate for any office is perfect, the materials will assist them in making difficult choices.

ICC is here to help; let us know how we can be of service.

Glenn Tebbe
Executive Director

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