



My Brother Priests,

Today is National Voter Registration Day! In California the deadline for registration for the National Election in November is this coming October 19th. As Catholics we have a responsibility to participate in the civic life of our nation, state and local community. In these next few months we will all participate in the political process as faithful Catholic citizens who vote consciously because we are people of faith. While participating in the political process, we need to ensure a few things:

1. We must participate responsibly:

There must be no direct or indirect urging of support of or opposition to candidates or political parties. The federal tax exemption applicable to the Church permits discussion of issues but does not permit campaigning for or against candidates.

Only those materials published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, by the California Catholic Conference, by the Diocese of Stockton, or an official agency or institution of the Catholic Church such as Catholic Charities or the Alliance of Catholic Health Care may be distributed in the parishes and institutions in California.

The California Conference of Bishops sent out a document that outlines how parishes can publish political content. I encourage you all to read the full document published by the California Catholic Conference which outlines these guidelines in more detail. The full document is provided below: <https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/21788/documents/2020/9/Guidelines%20for%20Political%20Activities%202020.pdf>

2. We must encourage Faithful Citizenship:

The Office of Catholic Social Teaching in collaboration with the Office of Communications from the diocese is working to continuously provide resources on Faithful Citizenship. Be on the lookout for some of those resources in the Weekly Updates. I would also encourage you to share the following links with your parishioners.

<https://stocktondiocese.org/faithful-citizenship>

<https://www.usccb.org/offices/justice-peace-human-development/forming-consciences-faithful-citizenship>

<https://www.cacatholic.org/action-alerts>

Please encourage all who can to register to vote. Registration can be done in person, by mail or online at: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/registering-vote>

Yours In Christ,

Bishop Myron J. Cotta