



The Catholic Bishops  
of Alberta

Les évêques catholiques  
de l'Alberta

8421 - 101 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6A 0L1 | T 780.469.1010 F 780.465.3003

---

May 16, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*Making an Informed, Moral Choice*

In preparation for the upcoming provincial election, the Catholic Bishops of Alberta wish to encourage all members of the Church to engage in the electoral process. By means of this letter, we offer to our Catholic faithful a reminder of important principles and concerns, which stem from the social doctrine of the Church, to guide the discernment of choices that accord with the Gospel's vision for the right ordering of society.

- *Solidarity.* We are one human family. Yet, in recent years especially, division has in many ways marred our common life. The Word of God calls us to see the other as our neighbour and pursue initiatives that promote justice among peoples. We look to our political representatives to work with us all as peacemakers in our communities, province, and nation.
- *Seeking together the common good.* Elected officials ensure the common good when they seek to create a human environment that enables citizens to exercise their rights and fulfill their corresponding duties. The Church, through Catholic education and healthcare, her parishes, and many charitable and social service works, seeks to promote the flourishing of a just and human society. Let us continue to advocate for the support of our Catholic institutions in their service of the common good.

- *Freedom of conscience and religion.* Conscience recognizes the obligation of every individual to seek the truth and live in accordance with it. Freedom of religion embraces not only the act of worship but also public witness to the truth as expressed in the tenets of faith. Those elected to govern must respect these liberties and uphold them.
- *The dignity and sanctity of every human life.* We expect elected officials to recognize and respect human dignity by defending and promoting inalienable rights. First among these, and foundational to all others, is the right to life from conception to natural death.
- *Concern for poor and vulnerable persons.* The litmus test for society's moral health is the attention and care given to the needy among us. How do those seeking political office plan to address the serious matter of homelessness, for example, or what priority will be given to welcoming immigrants and refugees? How shall we offer care and hope to people struggling with mental health challenges or living with terminal and/or debilitating illnesses?
- *Walking with the Indigenous Peoples.* During his visit to Alberta in 2022, Pope Francis apologized for harms of the past, advocated for the rights of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples of this land, welcomed the wisdom of their traditions, and praised the beauty of their cultures. This election campaign period presents an opportunity to encourage those running for political office to join the walk with Indigenous Peoples along the pathway of truth, healing, justice, reconciliation, and hope.
- *Care for God's creation.* Stewardship of our common home is a constitutive element of the Christian faith. The protection of both people and planet carries ethical demands that cannot be ignored. We are called to engage in dialogue with holders of political office on this important issue, and work with them to care for the world, which God has entrusted to us.

As Catholics, we have a moral obligation to be involved in the democratic process for the good of the human community. The considerations offered above can help each of us make voting choices that accord with our Catholic identity and moral values.

Please join with us in prayer for those elected to public office. They are assuming a heavy responsibility, often at great personal sacrifice. May they be granted the strength and wisdom to govern in accord with the precept of charity in service of the life and well-being of everyone.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

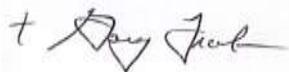
Catholic Bishops of Alberta



Most Reverend Richard W. Smith  
Archbishop of Edmonton



Most Reverend Gerard Pettipas CSsR  
Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan



Most Reverend Gary Franken  
Bishop of St. Paul



Most Reverend William McGrattan  
Bishop of Calgary



Most Reverend David Motiuk  
Bishop of the Ukrainian Eparchy of Edmonton