

The American Catholic Voter:
A Look at the 2004 Presidential Election

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Introduction

After the close Presidential election in 2000, both the Democrats and the Republicans were determined to fight for every last vote in 2004. The campaigns and parties targeted groups and demographics as crucial electorates for building up each candidate's voting base. While campaigns tended to focus on those groups solidly in their margin, some groups, such as the Catholics, were swing demographics yet carried significant enough numbers that they deserved attention. Catholic voters, while historically and traditionally Democrats, espoused socially conservative ideology, putting their votes potentially behind either party. Because the Catholic demographic made up about a quarter of the national population and even larger numbers in swing states such as Pennsylvania and Ohio, campaigns could not afford to ignore this group.¹ Both campaigns were faced with the challenge of winning over a politically divided demographic as well as the country's largest religious denomination at 65 million strong.²

The Catholic demographic seems politically confused and homeless on the political spectrum—"American Catholic voters are liberal about government in a way no economic or evangelical conservative can understand, and conservative about morals in a way no socialist or New Age liberal can grasp."³ Furthermore, one must also take into account that, as *The Wall Street Journal* editorial board stated, "the group is split by ethnic heritage, generations, education level and between the huge blocs that speak

¹ Gordon, Craig. "Catholic Voters." *Newsday*. 20 October 2004. A04. Lexis Nexis Online. 8 March 2005.

² Thomma, Steven. "Bush, Kerry Fight to Win Catholics." *Detroit Free Press*. 4 June 2004. http://www.freep.com/news/politics/bush4_20040604.htm. 17 January 2005.

³ Bottum, Joseph. "The Myth of the Catholic Voter." *The Weekly Standard*. 8 November 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

English and Spanish.”⁴ Catholics as a whole create a conglomeration of ideologies and persuasions, and once this demographic is split according to level of involvement, a much more clear line becomes apparent.

With so many factors to take into account, both campaigns spent countless hours and dollars outreaching to this group, which at the same time, was being influenced by the powerful hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. Both the parties and the Church were forced to change as politics and movements shifted over time. Clearly the true face of the American Catholic voter and the future political direction of this demographic would be indicated by the outcome of the heated 2004 election.

⁴ McGurn, William. “Style Counts.” *Crisis*. June 1999. p. 19.

The History of American Catholics in U.S. Politics

To understand the political direction of American Catholics today, it is crucial to look back upon the history of this group. American Catholics' history is a tale of immigration, discrimination, fraternity, economic upward movement, moral strength in the face of societal decay, and finally, an eventual split in the ranks of Catholics.

Early Days & Discrimination

From the moment Catholics touched down upon American soil, they faced discrimination and hatred because of their religious beliefs. People feared the ritualistic traditions of Roman Catholicism and the powerful hierarchy in Rome. When the possibility for Catholic political involvement was realized, Protestants and other religious denominations became determined to stop the spread of Catholics in government. Most Americans in the 19th century saw Roman Catholic politicians as a threat to national sovereignty—"they worried that an authoritarian church continued to stand against liberal reform, that an international church threatened national unity, and that Catholicism might slow scientific and intellectual progress."⁵ Protestants believed Catholics would turn the White House into a center of Catholic ritual, with Rome controlling American politics.

Republicans in the 1880 elections spread false rumors about Democratic candidate General Hancock being a Catholic in order to energize the Protestant base; "a Roman Chapel would be fitted up in it [The White House] with the superstitious paraphernalia of Roman worship. The White House would become the headquarters of

⁵ McGreevy, John. *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2003. p. 93.

priests, nuns, monks and so on. The Pope of Rome would be influential in that house.”⁶

When Republican James Garfield won the close 1880 election, he categorized the

Democrats’ campaign as the “combined power of rebellion, Catholicism and whiskey.”⁷

Clearly, the anti-Catholic attacks were employed for political reasons to excite

Protestants into voting Republican.

However, this anti-Catholic movement was more than just a campaign tactic.

Besides the verbal discrimination and political attacks, anti-Catholic legislation began to

make its way through Congress. Catholics felt threatened when President Grant

prohibited aid to Catholic schools and enforced a tax on Church property.

However, not only did Catholics face challenges from Protestants and

Republicans, but also from their own religion. The Catholic Church was once hostile to

democracy and pluralism. In the young days of the United States, the Church was only

open to a state where Catholicism was the official religion, and Catholic values were the

law of the land. For the first time, the Catholic Church had a significant group of its

religious faithful willingly living in a country not dominated by Catholicism. It was not

until Vatican Council II in the 1950s that the Church retracted its negative view of

American government.⁸ This historical fact about the Catholic Church is crucial to

understanding later problems faced in modern US politics, as the Catholic hierarchy had

no precedence for the Church’s rule in democratic politics.

⁶ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter: 200 Years of Political Impact*. South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2004. p. 107.

⁷ McGreevy, p. 93.

⁸ Cochran, Clarke E. and David Carroll Cochran. *Catholics, Politics, and Public Policy: Beyond Left and Right*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003. p. 11.

An Alliance Forms

The close of the Civil War halted some of the prejudice due to the high character and involvement of Catholics in the military and in charities—“her soldiers fought bravely, and Americans witnessed uncountable acts of Catholic charity...Catholic and non-Catholic comrades, living, marching and fighting together, put to rest many old prejudices.”⁹ Protestants around the country realized the importance of the Catholic manpower both during the war and in the nation’s urban centers, and furthermore, could no longer politically afford to attack them. Also, as the North grew more confident after the war, it no longer feared a European stronghold. Politically, the nativist Republicans were losing their hold on the party, and general attitudes towards immigrants were improving.¹⁰

Looking for political support, the Catholics grew their alliance with the Democrats. The most crucial factor in this relationship was their status as immigrants, a group that often found favor with the Democrats. Catholics poured into America, especially with political crisis in Europe and the potato famine in Ireland; their share of the population jumped from one percent in 1790 to 21 percent in 1920, growing by 63 percent during the 1820s.^{11,12} As Catholic immigrants arrived, they fell right into the arms of the Democratic party, which was already centered in the urban locations—“arriving from Europe, Catholic immigrants found factory jobs and were welcomed by their church, labor unions and the Democratic Party in New York, Philadelphia,

⁹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. P. 89.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.90.

¹¹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.37.

¹² Barone, Michael. Introduction. *The American Catholic Voter: 200 Years of Political Impact*. South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2004. p. xiv.

Cleveland and Chicago.”¹³ Being welcomed by their churches, the Democratic Party and the labor unions, a solid connection was formed between these three groups that would last through the century.

In the Democratic Party the Catholics found a “power base against the American establishment—Protestants and Republicans—that excluded them from power and privileges.”¹⁴ Not only were the Democrats taking a stand against the controlling powers, but the ideals of the Democratic Party fit with Church teachings. In Andrew Jackson, one of the fathers of the Democratic Party, Catholics saw characteristics they identified with—“the Jacksonian movement was built on the cultural values of the emerging common man. These values included honor, self-reliance, equality and individualism.”¹⁵

In the unions Catholics found a way to band together and concentrate power against the establishment. The power connection of the labor unions and the Democratic Party was born through the political machines; “the alliance between Catholic pols and the fledgling labor movement was natural, working together, the politicians and the union leaders tried to improve working conditions for the poor.”¹⁶ The idea of the political machine was an idea that greatly appealed to Catholics: “the hierarchical structure of the machines, like the hierarchical structure of the Roman Catholic Church, appealed to Irish Catholics, who were content to wait their turn for eventual reward as their ancestors had in rural Irish villages.”¹⁷ Through these machines, Catholic immigrants found their voice and their political home; for almost eighty years the Democratic Catholic machines

¹³ Thomma

¹⁴ Novak, Robert D. “The Catholic Vote: Does it Swing?” *Crisis*. November 1998.

¹⁵ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p. 39-40.

¹⁶ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p. 140.

¹⁷ Barone, p. xvi.

controlled the urban landscape.¹⁸ Further solidifying the Catholics' position in American politics, the Catholic hierarchy gave their blessing to the unions and political machines for "attempting to improve the lot of the faithful."¹⁹

However, despite the Democrat's stronghold on Roman Catholics, the political struggle between the two parties for this demographic was not completely absent. In fact, one of the reasons the GOP selected Abraham Lincoln as their candidate was his opposition to anti-immigration laws and his popularity with German Catholics. The Democrats saw a period of unpopularity with many Catholics under their candidate, William Jennings Bryan, an agrarian Protestant, who turned away many Catholics and pushed them into the Republican column.²⁰ In 1860, the Republicans campaigned for Catholic votes by promoting the Church's opposition to the slave trade, hoping to win Catholics over by the Republican's anti-slavery sentiments.²¹ Yet, despite Catholics voting for Republicans in some elections, they remained the "mainstays of the Democratic political machines that grew up in almost every large Northern city and which were usually headed by and largely manned by Irish Catholics."²²

The American Catholic immigrants had found a political home and gave their loyalty to their party, their union and their parish. Catholics aligned themselves with the Democratic Party whether they lived in rural or urban centers or what class they belonged

¹⁸ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p. 138.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.141.

²⁰ Barone, p.xv.

²¹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.80.

²² Barone, p.xvi.

to. They voted to represent their religious and ethnic groups as a means of standing against those who challenged their status as Americans.²³

Al Smith and the 1928 Election

A noteworthy presidential election in American Catholic history was the 1928 race between the first Catholic candidate, Democrat Al Smith, and his opponent, Republican Herbert Hoover. Smith was straight out of the Tammany political machine and a Catholic of Irish, German and Italian descent.²⁴ Smith also brought with him a shift in the focus of the Democratic Party—something gladly awaited by Catholics. He left behind the free silver and agrarian ideas of William Jennings Bryan and embraced the agendas of “public welfare, sanitation, school boards, and zoning laws”—exactly the urban issues with which Catholics could connect.²⁵ His focus was on the Catholic theory of subsidiarity—the idea that the government should not be involved where the individual, the community or the church could handle the matter. However, subsidiarity also means that the government should provide what is beyond the means of the community, in order to allow for the full development of the dignity of each person.²⁶

However, the largest issue on the campaign had nothing to do with policy; rather, Smith’s Roman Catholic faith stirred up the most controversy. Despite that others focused on his Catholicism, he tried to avoid the issue without outwardly denying his faith. In the May 1927 *Atlantic Monthly*, Smith states that “I have taken an oath of office nineteen times. Each time I swore to defend and maintain the Constitution of the United

²³ Ibid., p. 59.

²⁴ Ibid., p.xvi.

²⁵ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p. 175.

²⁶ Marlin, George J. “The Inner City Catholic: From the Boss to the Gipper.” *Crisis*. November 1998. p.33-39.

States...I have never known any conflict between my official duties and my religious beliefs.”²⁷ However, in anger once after being attacked fervently, he claimed that he had never “heard of these bulls and encyclicals and books,” causing an uproar from his Catholic base.²⁸ Overall, Smith stuck to the issues of his platform, and it was the Protestant community that initiated the anti-Catholic attacks, “although veiled comments about Catholicism even crept into endorsements.”²⁹

Hoover himself tried to stay away from the religious mess, despite controversy that Republican dollars were financing many of the attacks.³⁰ The majority of the anti-Catholic, anti-Smith fire rose up from the depths of America’s anti-Catholicism history. There was even anger from within the Democratic Party about a Catholic candidate, because, at the time, the Ku Klux Klan and the Prohibition movement both had deep ties to the Democratic Party.³¹ Protestant pastors and leaders rose up around the country and condemned Al Smith; his backers were charged with developing an “alien Catholic conspiracy to overthrow Protestant, Anglo-Saxon majority under which the country had achieved its independence and its greatness.”³² He was decried as being a “drinker,” “ring-kisser,” related to bootleggers and harlots, Tammany and liquor, and greeted by burning crosses around the Midwest.³³

Along with Smith’s already low chances of winning the election, the anti-Catholic movement against him was a fatal blow to his campaign, costing him traditional

²⁷ Ibid., p.182.

²⁸ McGreevy, p.149.

²⁹ Ibid., p.148.

³⁰ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.186.

³¹ Ibid., p.178.

³² Ibid., p.181.

³³ Ibid., p.183.

Democratic states such as Texas, Oklahoma and Florida.³⁴ Republican Senator George Norris of Nebraska stated that “the greatest element involved in the landslide was religion” and *The New York Times* wrote that “most of (the votes) were cast against the Democratic candidate because he was a Catholic.”³⁵

Despite Smith’s loss, he brought out larger amounts of Catholics to the polls than ever before. Catholic political leaders and their respective districts mobilized for Smith in record numbers. Their work helped Smith win the 12 largest U.S. cities. In 1920 and 1924 the Democratic candidates lost these cities by 1,636,000 and 1,152,000 votes, while Smith won the cities by 38,000 votes. Furthermore, his 15,000,185 votes surpassed all previous Democratic candidates, and voter turnout increased by almost 11 percent over the previous presidential election. Boston, a very Catholic city, had turnout of 93 percent, double the amount from 1924. Rhode Island and Massachusetts, also heavily Catholic, had gone to the Republican column until 1928 when Smith turned it around. Smith and the enthusiastic Catholic community successfully mobilized Catholic voters, getting 80 percent to vote for Smith.³⁶

Brewing Discontent

Loyal Catholics returned to the Democrats after 1928, but there were signs of discontent with the liberal turns the Democratic Party was taking.³⁷ However, under attack by Protestants and with candidates like Smith strongly supporting the urban centers, Catholics saw no other option than to remain under the Democrat’s umbrella.

³⁴ McGreevy, p.150.

³⁵ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*, p.190.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p.187-188.

³⁷ Novak, p.31.

Catholics remained banded together as a religious and ethnic voting block, by casting nearly all their votes for the immigrant Catholic candidate Al Smith, and other Democrats.

After World War II, American society changed in many ways. Political parties, neighborhoods and families' social status all shifted. The Democratic Party was moving away from its old roots of local politics and switching to Franklin Roosevelt's big government policies.³⁸ As political parties began to alter their ideological stances, Catholics started to realize that the common ideals they had with the Democratic Party were not necessarily still present.

Furthermore, the traditional Catholic demographic began to change as well after World War II. The inflow of immigrants tapered off, soldiers were coming home to VA housing and GI Bill opportunities, and with Federal Housing Authority grants for suburban homes, Catholics began moving out of the urban centers they once inhabited.³⁹ The urban European Catholic neighborhoods no longer existed, thus destroying most of the forces behind the parish, union and party alliance. As Catholics moved out to suburbia and found educational opportunities, their economic status began to increase, and they assimilated into middleclass America. Along with their new social status, Catholics began to focus on new cultural issues, such as school choice—an issue where the Democrats disagreed.⁴⁰ This shift caused by World War II shook apart some of the solidity of the Democratic Catholic tradition.

³⁸ Marlin, George J. "The Inner City Catholic." P.35.

³⁹ Ibid., p.225.

⁴⁰ Barone, p.xvi.

Coming off the unpopular presidency of Harry Truman, Eisenhower and the Republican Party began to look to the Catholic demographic to help win the 1952 election. The GOP knew that Catholics were becoming uneasy with parts of the Democratic Party, and they also knew that in order for Eisenhower to win, some part of FDR's New Deal constituency had to be broken away.⁴¹ Furthermore, with the onset of the Red Scare, Eisenhower's strict stance against Communism brought many Catholics into the Republican fold. Catholic doctrine was firmly against Communism, and many Eastern European and German Catholics were happy to jump on the anti-Communism bandwagon with the Republicans. Gallup polls show that in 1951 to 1954, 56 percent of Catholics had a positive view of McCarthy and his Communist chase, thus putting them in-line with Eisenhower.⁴² The 1952 election saw a voter shift, with over three million Catholics moving into the Republican margin, and Eisenhower getting 46 percent of the Catholic vote.⁴³

John F. Kennedy and the 1960 Election

However, the Republicans had not permanently secured the Catholic vote, for in 1960 the Democrats put forward an Irish Catholic, John F. Kennedy. Here was an interesting situation, for Kennedy possessed the liberal, Harvard ideals of his elite upbringing, yet at the same time, he understood—although not always adhered to—the socially conservative ideas of the Catholics Church.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.231

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.224-225.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.235.

⁴⁴ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.239.

Kennedy faced the anti-Catholic issue much as Al Smith had in 1928. According to the Fair Campaign Practices Committee, 392 separate anti-Catholic campaign pamphlets were created, and it is estimated that around 25 million were distributed.⁴⁵ Faced by attacks from Protestants and other groups like Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, Kennedy sought to diffuse the issue, denying that his religion would affect his job as President. In order to fend off the alarmed Protestants, Kennedy backed away from many Catholic issues: “he rescinded his support of aid to parochial schools, reversed his support for diplomatic recognition of the Vatican, and went against the Church hierarchy by endorsing foreign aid to Communist Yugoslavia.”⁴⁶ It seemed to many that Kennedy was trying to play both sides, acting as the stalwart Catholic to half the population and as the indifferent Catholic to the remainder of the country. Even though he had rescinded on his agreement to help gain aid for parochial schools, he tried to soothe the wounds by stating that private school students should get aid for health care, transportation and text books.⁴⁷ Although like Smith, Kennedy denied his religion would get in the way, he went further in his attempts to distance himself.

Yet, Kennedy underestimated the effect this near-rejection of his religion had on the traditional Catholic base in America—“had John Kennedy not been Catholic, we might mistake him for an anti-Catholic candidate.”⁴⁸ While Kennedy’s statements and positions firmly distanced him from the hierarchy in Rome and eased some anxious Protestants, his comments also made many Catholics nervous regarding his “rigid

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.254-255.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.249.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.240.

⁴⁸ Wagner, Steven. “Prendergest’s Legacy.” *Crisis*. April 2000.

distinction between religion and public life.”⁴⁹ Despite his disregard for Rome, Kennedy’s family became irate when the Church did not speak out publicly in favor of his candidacy. Kennedy’s father, a large financial supporter of the Church, “had expected that, at the very least, directions would have been given to parishes...to get Catholics to the polls to support one of their own.”⁵⁰

However, despite the concerned Catholics, Kennedy had no problem sweeping up 73 percent of the Catholic vote according to Gallup and as much as 83 percent according to some sources.^{51,52} Among active Catholics, numbers reach around 87 percent voting for Kennedy. Catholics at this time made up around 22 percent of the electorate, thus giving Kennedy a significant number of votes.⁵³ Kennedy’s Catholicism was a major factor in winning Roman Catholic voters back and driving away many Protestants. 67 percent of Catholics who voted for Republican candidate Eisenhower in 1956 came back to their historical political home.⁵⁴

Even with his attempts to back away from his Catholic ties, Kennedy lost badly among the Protestants who normally voted for Democrats; he was also the first president ever elected without a majority of the Protestant vote.^{55,56} The votes in 1960 were not split by economic or class lines; rather, the US became divided by religion and culture, a trend that was just beginning. Gallup polls show that only 37 percent of white Protestants

⁴⁹ McGreevy, p.213.

⁵⁰ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.256.

⁵¹ Barone, p. xvii.

⁵² Novak, p.31.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.31.

⁵⁴ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.257.

⁵⁵ Barone, xvii.

⁵⁶ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.257.

voted for Kennedy, and other sources claiming that three-fourths of Catholics supported Kennedy while three-fourths of white Protestants voted for Nixon.^{57,58}

It seems that Kennedy's attempts to distance himself from Catholicism achieved little benefit with the Protestant voters. While these same moves troubled some Catholics, clearly it was not serious enough to lose votes over, as nearly every Roman Catholic voted for him. The issues over which Catholics disagreed with Kennedy were not enough to override economic issues, or the very fact that he was a fellow Catholic. Kennedy was saved by the fact that abortion, euthanasia, cloning and gay marriage were still in the future.

The 1960s-1970s: A Time of Change

Although Kennedy beat Nixon and carried a large percentage of Roman Catholic votes he brought in from Roman Catholics, he still received less Catholic votes than Al Smith. The breakup of ethnic, immigrant neighborhoods contributed somewhat to the decrease, as did the continued concern over the gradual leftward movement of the Democratic Party.⁵⁹ With the exit of Kennedy, Catholic support of Democrats saw a diminishing trend, although not disappearing. This trend continued through the 1964 election of Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1964 only 32 percent of Catholics considered themselves "strong Democrats," down from 52 percent in 1960. Johnson also

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.xviii.

⁵⁸ Feldman, Linda. "Bush, Kerry and a battle for Catholics." *Christian Science Monitor*. 4 June 2004. <http://www.csmonistor.com/2004/0604/p01s01-uspo.html>. 18 January 2005.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.261.

received more inactive Catholic votes than Kennedy and less active Catholic votes.⁶⁰ He did not have the same appeal to Catholics that Kennedy had.

With the onset of the late 1960s, Catholic voters were greatly affected by a significant change in America's culture and political landscape. The legalization of abortion endangered the Democrat-Catholic alliance; it became such a threat because it was a central political issue and very important to traditional Catholics. When the Democratic Party had focused on economic issues such as the New Deal, welfare and unions, Catholics had voted solidly blue; yet, as soon as the left focused on a cultural revolution that included legal abortions, better access to birth control, graphic sex education and less media censorship, many traditional Catholics were turned off.^{61,62} Along with these moral issues, Catholics noticed a general shift in the Democrats ideology. As the Democratic platform continued to move leftward, it moved away from the traditional Catholic value of equality of opportunity and towards the liberal, socialist idea of equality of result.⁶³

All of these issues brought took many Catholic votes away from Democrat Hubert Humphrey in his race against Nixon in 1968. While the Democrats still won the majority of the Catholic vote around 57 to 59 percent, Nixon experienced a large increase of Catholic support.⁶⁴ Nixon picked up most of his Catholic votes from those who had escaped the inner city slums, although the elitist liberal areas continued to vote

⁶⁰ Novak, p.31.

⁶¹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.259.

⁶² McGreevy, p.153.

⁶³ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.274.

⁶⁴ Novak, p.31.

Democrat.⁶⁵ In the Northeast, Nixon had no problem picking up the Catholic working-class vote; all of his top 18 New York City Assembly districts were mostly working-class Catholic neighborhoods. The New York European ethnic Catholics had voted for Kennedy on a five to four margin, but supported Nixon over Humphrey and George Wallace on a five to three to one margin.⁶⁶ While the Republican Party was busy picking up the typically Democrat, urban, working-class Catholics, the Democrats continued to alienate much of their base by focusing on radical cultural issues.⁶⁷ This push by the Democratic Party for a more socially liberal society was the main reason the Republican Party was moving in on the Democrat's Catholic hold. Catholics did not see Nixon as a threat to their religion, as he agreed with them on the majority of moral issues.⁶⁸

The Vietnam War also brought many voters into the Republican's column, especially in 1972 when Nixon ran against the extremely liberal George McGovern. Active Catholics were more supportive of the war than the average U.S. citizen, thus placing their support behind Nixon, rather than McGovern.⁶⁹ Along with the war came unrest in the cities and radical activism; Catholics were upset by "accusations from radical left-wing students, feminists, and civil rights activists"—all part of the Democratic coalition—"that practicing their traditional beliefs was racist or selfish."⁷⁰ The Democrat's were truly losing their grip on the Catholic vote when in 1972, for the first time, Catholics voted along with the national average rather than solidly

⁶⁵ Marlin, George J. "The Inner City Catholic." p.37-38.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.37.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p.39.

⁶⁸ Wagner, Steven. "Prendergest's Legacy." p.45.

⁶⁹ Novak, p.31.

⁷⁰ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.272.

Democratic.⁷¹ McGovern was able to pull only 39 percent of the Catholic vote, while 59 percent voted for Nixon.⁷² Less than half of all Catholics considered themselves Democrats, but most were Independents as the Republican Party still seemed too far to the right.^{73,74} At this time of cultural change, Catholic voters once again found themselves politically homeless.

As the Democratic Party moved farther left, and under Ronald Reagan, the Republican Party would soon move to the right, the ideology of American Catholics offered insight as to what the political future held: 19 percent of active Catholics and 31 percent of inactives considered themselves liberal, and 36 percent of active Catholics and 30 percent of inactives considered themselves conservative.⁷⁵ With the rise of moral issues and the liberal theories of the cultural and sexual revolution, the split between inactive and active Catholics was becoming more evident as time went on—there were many more issues in the 1970s to divide these two groups than ever before. The inactive Catholics were blending in with the national average, while the active Catholics still voted according to Catholic tradition and doctrine. The traditional, active Catholic group was clearly the identifiable Catholic vote, and it was also this group that was shifting to the right with the Republican Party.

This ideological split only grew; in 1976, 42 percent of active Catholics considered themselves conservative, while the inactives were evenly divided in their

⁷¹ Novak, p.31.

⁷² Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.282.

⁷³ Novak, p.31.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.31.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.31.

political stance.⁷⁶ However, because of the Watergate scandals and the end of the war, Catholics found little reason to rally behind the Republican Party, and 57 percent of Catholics voted for Democrat Jimmy Carter.⁷⁷ Clearly, the Catholics were so repulsed by Nixon's behavior, that even despite the abortion issue, the majority of the Catholic vote still went to the Democrats. In 1976, the Democratic National Committee put a pro-choice stance into their platform, and the Church nearly took sides with Ford, as Archbishop Joseph Bernard of Cincinnati called out the Democratic Party for "opposing protection of the life of the unborn and endorsing permissive abortion."⁷⁸ Although Ford did not pick up the kind of Catholic support that Nixon experienced, he was also not running against the radical McGovern, and Carter gained the majority of the Catholic vote. Gone were the days of strong Catholic majorities voting for the Democratic candidate, yet the Catholics saw little where else to turn.

A Turning Point

The climax of Catholics turning against the Democratic Party occurred in the 1980s under Republican Ronald Reagan.⁷⁹ At the end of the 1970s, traditional Catholics were "bewildered by the new social order that promoted secular ideologies such as Marxism, Darwinism, Freudianism and behaviorism—all of which denied man's spirituality and declared him free of all moral constraints."⁸⁰ Along with society's downward moral spiral, middle class America was suffering economically and was

⁷⁶ Novak, p.31-32.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p.31-32.

⁷⁸ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.289.

⁷⁹ Novak, p.30.

⁸⁰ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.286.

desperately searching for fresh ideas to bring relief.⁸¹ America was at a political fork in the road, faced with a decision between liberal Carter and conservative Reagan.

Not only was America at a political crossroads, but the American Catholic Church was as well. More liberal groups sprung up within the Church, focusing more on Liberation Theology and social justice and change, rather than salvation and looking after the local parish. Many active, more traditional Catholics grew upset as liberal Catholics concentrated their efforts on civil rights, social justice, and the anti-war movement.⁸² The Vatican tried to stop the separation by issuing two documents on Liberation Theology in 1984 and 1986.⁸³ Despite segments of the Catholic community clinging to this modern philosophy, Rome and most rank and file Catholics maintained a more conservative world view.

However, attempts by Rome to end the leftwing swing of some American Catholics did not stop the American bishops from voicing their often liberal opinions. While the American bishops supported the Republican Party's pro-life stance, most sat with the Democratic Party on all other issues. Many individual bishops however, despite their Democratic tendencies, maintained that abortion should be the most prominent issue for Catholic voters.⁸⁴ Yet, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops undercut the views of many individual bishops by declaring that while abortion was important, unemployment, education and universal healthcare were just as crucial—thus finding a way to not endorse Reagan. There was a strong presence of liberal bishops at this time,

⁸¹ Ibid., p.295.

⁸² Ibid., p.285.

⁸³ Weigel, George. *Soul of the World: Notes on the Future of Public Catholicism*. Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington D.C. Grand Rapids, MI. William Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996. p. 115.

⁸⁴ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.300.

as many had been appointed in the 1960s and 1970s. Some were as extreme as Seattle's Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, who firmly came out in favor of unilateral US disarmament and called on Catholics to hold out on half of their federal income tax that would go to "nuclear murder."⁸⁵

Despite the veiled, pro-Democrat preachings coming from much of the Church's American hierarchy, active Catholics seemed to disregard the liberal comments coming from the pulpit. Reagan had the strongest ever Republican showing with Catholics, bringing in 49 percent of their vote and 54 percent of the active Catholics' votes.^{86,87} However, a plurality of inactive Catholics voted for Carter.⁸⁸ By 1984, Reagan achieved somewhere between 58 and 61 percent of the Catholic vote, depending on the source.^{89,90} Looking to Northeastern states such as New York, Reagan carried the state by 47 percent in 1980, 54 percent in 1984, and in many of the working class and predominately Catholic districts, Reagan won the Catholic vote by landslides of over 80 percent.⁹¹ Catholics' affiliation with the Democratic Party dropped to an all time low of 37 percent, proving the Catholics' disenchantment with their traditional party.⁹² Looking at all the data, the Gallup Poll determined that Catholics were still technically swing voters but had definitely left the days of solidly voting for one party. Gallup pollsters hinted as to why future campaigns would fight so hard for the Catholic vote: "One thing is clear, no

⁸⁵ Ibid., p.299.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p.296.

⁸⁷ Novak, p.32.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p.32.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p.32

⁹⁰ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter.* p.303.

⁹¹ Marlin, George J. "The Inner City Catholic." p.39.

⁹² Novak, p.32.

Democrat will ever be elected president without heavy Catholic support, and no candidate, Democrat or Republican, can take the Catholic vote for granted.”⁹³

Reagan was the answer to the traditional Catholics’ unhappiness with the Democratic Party. The Reagan campaign knew this religious group was looking for someone who respected working-class values and morals; therefore, “to cement this coalition, Reagan ran on a platform that pledged to restore America’s traditional morals at home and its strength and respect abroad, and that pledged to reject redistributive politics at home.”⁹⁴ The one hurdle Reagan faced was with his economic plans that seemed opposed to Catholic teachings on solidarity with the poor. Reagan, “the great communicator,” was able to convince Catholics however, that there were ways to help the poor other than handouts, and he was able to explain the benefits of his free market plan “by weaving it into the fabric of his moral vision.”⁹⁵ Furthermore, his pro-life stance automatically brought in many Catholics, as did his easy going attitude. He continued to play up his appeal to Catholics through visits with Pope John Paul II, continuing to denounce the moral degradation of society, and by remaining on the side of the middle class.⁹⁶ Reagan ran a smart campaign and was able to tie all the issues into moral renewal—exactly what the country, and American Catholics, were looking for at the time.

Reagan’s campaign was successful with the Catholic community—“many Catholic voters sent a strong message in 1980 that they had had it with the Democratic

⁹³ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*, p.302.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.293.

⁹⁵ McGurn. “Style Counts.” p.21.

⁹⁶ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.302.

Party's radical social agenda, appeasement policies toward the Communists, and failed economic policies."⁹⁷ Traditional Catholics were upset with the direction the Democrats were taking; the Democrats put a reproductive freedom and human rights clause in the platform in 1984, and in 1982, pro-life Pennsylvania Governor Robert Casey was banned from speaking at the Democrat's convention.⁹⁸ Union members, blue-collar workers and traditional rank and file Catholics all moved to Reagan because of his positions on issues such as busing, drugs, crime, Communism, school prayer, school choice and of course abortion.⁹⁹ The Republican's pro-life agenda was the key to Reagan winning the Catholic vote more than any other issue. Fighting for the right to life fired up Catholics around the country to become politically involved. Above all other issues facing the public, abortion was the one thing on which traditional Catholics refused to compromise. Catholic politicians that did not share this opinion—Edward Kennedy, Geraldine Ferraro and Mario Cuomo—"were viewed more as traitors than champions."¹⁰⁰ The American Catholic movement had seen the height of its liberal and Democratic days come and go. Yet Democrats would still win majorities of the Catholic vote in many elections; the fight would continue for the Catholic vote.

The Catholic Swing Vote of the 1990s

In 1988, George H.W. Bush was able to rely on many of the connections Reagan had made with the Catholics. While his Democrat opponent took back some of the blue collar votes Reagan had won, Bush still managed to carry a majority of Catholics at 51

⁹⁷ Ibid., p.297.

⁹⁸ McGreevy, p.281.

⁹⁹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p. 298-299.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p.302.

percent.^{101,102} The Democrats' strategy hurt their share of the Catholic vote by catering to "interest groups hostile to the Catholic agenda;" Bush's campaign was successful by stressing social issues, as nationally, voters ranked abortion and drug abuse as some of the top issues.^{103,104}

However, the election was not so easy in 1992, and Bush lost many of the Catholics because his position on moral issues during his first term had been not as far to the right as Reagan's. Furthermore, with the end of the Cold War, the Republicans could no longer use their tough stance on Communism against the Democrats.¹⁰⁵

Bill Clinton was able to win the Catholic vote in 1992 by talking about his faith and values, and mainly by keeping the focus on economic issues. Clinton spoke much more freely about his Christian faith than Bush, a successful campaign tactic to win over Protestants and Catholics.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, he focused on more conservative ideals that appealed to Catholics such as "reciprocity, end welfare as we know it, personal responsibility, honor business, more police."¹⁰⁷ However, the key for Clinton was to drive home the economic issues, where he was on much more solid ground with the Catholics. Bush took him up on these terms and dropped his own focus on the cultural issues. Thus, with most of the debates and campaigning focused on economics, Clinton was able to easily take back the Reagan Democrats, especially Hispanic and urban

¹⁰¹ Novak, p.32.

¹⁰² Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.306.

¹⁰³ Wagner, Steven. "Prendergest's Legacy." p.44

¹⁰⁴ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.306.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p.314.

¹⁰⁶ McGreevy, p.69.

¹⁰⁷ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.317.

Catholics.¹⁰⁸ Clinton swept the ten states with the highest Catholic population, and won 44 percent of the Catholic vote to Bush's 35 and Perot's 21. Hispanic and inactive Catholics voted clearly for Clinton, while active Catholics still tended to vote for Bush. Thus despite Clinton's win in the overall Catholic margin, the division within the Catholic demographic remained split between more traditional, active Catholics and those who had drifted from the Church but still self-identified as Catholics.¹⁰⁹

In 1996, Clinton picked up an even larger percentage of the Catholic vote: 54 percent to Dole's 31 percent.¹¹⁰ Clinton ran worse among many religious groups than he had in 1992, yet he improved his Catholic numbers.¹¹¹ This increase is most likely attributed to strong outreach to the Hispanic Catholics and "cafeteria" Catholics—or those that pick and choose which Church laws to follow. He knew he could not win the traditional Catholic vote, so he sought the other groups of Catholics; "he played his Georgetown University card, and made in roads with left-wing Jesuits and their followers. Mrs. Clinton also reached out to "Dorothy Day" left-wing Catholics who controlled Catholic Charities."¹¹² Clearly, he was successful in his plan, for Clinton brought in 75 percent of the Hispanic Catholic vote, compared to Dole's 19 percent, and 57 percent of the cafeteria Catholics, against Dole's 31 percent. Dole however won 52 percent of white practicing Catholics, and Clinton only 39 percent.¹¹³ The trends are clear in the charts below, which show the shifting nature of Catholic voters.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p.318.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.317.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p.325.

¹¹¹ Novak, p.30.

¹¹² Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.323.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.325.

**Percent of Catholics Voting for Democratic
Presidential Candidates**

<i>Year</i>	<i>All Catholics</i>	<i>Active</i>	<i>Inactive</i>
1960	82%	90%	68%
1964	80%	80%	80%
1968	55%	58%	50%
1972	36%	38%	37%
1976	60%	60%	60%
1980	44%	37%	50%
1984	44%	44%	44%
1988	52%	54%	52%
1992	45%	35%	53%
1996	55%	40%	55%

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**Percent of
Catholics saying
They are
Democrats**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1960	64%
1964	58%
1968	53%
1972	51%
1976	49%
1980	42%
1984	39%
1988	38%
1992	41%
1996	41%

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¹¹⁴ Wagner, Steven. "The Catholic Political Identity." *Crisis*. November 1998. p27.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.27.

**Portion of Active
Catholics who say
they are
Conservative**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Amount</i>
1972	36%
1976	42%
1980	44%
1984	40%
1988	47%
1992	48%
1996	51%

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The 2000 Election

The 2000 election is an important one to look at, as the situation and the candidates were very similar to 2004. Both candidates knew it was going to be a close election, therefore, every group, demographic, and category mattered. Because the Catholics were about a quarter of the electorate, they became a targeted group. The outcome of 2000 would help the 2004 campaign teams plan their strategies. The Bush-Cheney team knew that they had downplayed moral issues too much in 2000, losing easy votes. Had George W. Bush won a larger percentage of the “morally concerned,” he could have added around five million more votes.¹¹⁷ Clearly, the moral issues were vital to the Republicans’ strategy, as the socially conservative states voted for Bush, while the states that cared more about economic issues went to Gore.¹¹⁸ Another indicator of Bush’s connection to the morally concerned was that 54 percent of his voters in 2000 were observant Protestants or Catholics, while only 20 percent of Gore’s votes came from this demographic.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p.29.

¹¹⁷ Wagner, Steven. “Will America Bury the Hatchet?” p.13.

¹¹⁸ Arkes, Hadley. “Win or Lose—Pro-Lifers get the Blame.” p.9.

¹¹⁹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.331.

The post-election statistics from 2000 give a clear view of the divide between active, traditional Catholics and the cafeteria Catholics. Bush lost the overall Catholic vote to Gore, 49 percent to 47 percent, not far from the national popular vote.¹²⁰ However, when it is broken down by type of Catholic, a much clearer picture appears. Bush won the white Catholic vote by a small margin, around 51 to 53 percent to Gore's roughly 46 to 47 percent.^{121,122} Clearly, any minority votes went right into Gore's column as 51 percent of his overall votes came from blacks, Hispanics or non Christians. Furthermore, Gore won the Hispanic Catholic vote by a landslide—76 percent. Gore also walked away with the cafeteria Catholics, taking 59 percent of their vote. Yet, Bush won the practicing Catholics by 57 percent—a group more likely to vote on moral issues and according to Church doctrine.¹²³ If you further break down the Catholic vote, Bush won the traditionalist Catholics by 61 percent and the centrist Catholics by 55 percent.¹²⁴ It is not hard to see that the more actively religious and more tied to the traditional teachings of the Church the voter is, the more likely one was to vote Republican.

The Catholic Shift

When looking over American Catholic history, it is apparent that a gradual shift has occurred in Catholics' political place in society. The original reason for Catholics joining forces with the Democrats was the Party's openness to immigrants and solidarity with labor and working class causes. Furthermore, many Catholics voted Democrat as a

¹²⁰ Stricherz, Mark. "The Nation's Pulse; Winter Dreams: Why Catholics aren't yet part of the Republican Base." *The American Spectator*. April 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2004.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.331.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p.331.

¹²⁴ Stricherz.

solid block because they viewed ethnic solidarity as a way to ensure their immigrant voices were heard. Once this need for ethnic solidarity died out in the middle of the 20th century, so did the strong Catholic voting bloc.¹²⁵

Leaving behind the focus on labor and the economy, Catholics grew more and more concerned about issues such as crime, affirmative action, abortion, welfare costs, national defense, patriotism and traditional American values.¹²⁶ As Catholics became more conservative, the Democratic Party became more socially liberal, taking a pro-choice position, and siding with the radical anti-war, feminist and pro-Communist movements. Ronald Reagan, a firm believer in embracing moral values, was the first real attraction Catholics had to the Republican Party. Reagan called out to those socially conservative Democrats:

The secret is that when the Left took over the Democratic Party, we took over the Republican Party. We made the Republican Party into the party of the working people, the family, the neighborhood, the defense of freedom, and yes, the American flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to one nation under God. So, you see, the party that so many of us grew up with still exists, except that today it's called the Republican Party.¹²⁷

The biggest issue in the end was what many Catholics considered the largest moral issue: the loose sexual mores of society that included the legalization of abortion; “understandings of gender and sexuality would eventually become the central dividing lines between Catholics and American liberals, and divisible within Catholicism as

¹²⁵ Bottum.

¹²⁶ Marlin, George J. “The Inner City Catholic.” p.36.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p.39.

well.”¹²⁸ The active Catholics began to vote more like the traditional Protestants, as the two groups began to discover their cultural similarities.¹²⁹

By the time of the 2000 election, Catholics were no longer voting as a Democratic bloc, but rather, closer to the national average, proving that “Catholics are no longer party of the core Democratic constituency.”¹³⁰ However, one is overlooking the true trend by simply stating that Catholics now vote the same as the general public. Instead, the Catholic vote can be summarized by saying that “the realignment of party affiliation to reflect voters’ degree of religiosity rather than their traditional political loyalties is the big story of American politics over the last few decades.”¹³¹ Over American history, changes in society and political parties have caused a gradual shift in Catholic voting patterns; the most significant trend being the split between inactive and active voters.

¹²⁸ McGreevy, p.157.

¹²⁹ Schmalz, Valerie. “Did the ‘Catholic Vote’ Count?” Ignatius Insight. 1 November 2004. http://www.ignatiusinsight.com/features/vsschmalz_cathvote1_nov04.asp. 14 March 2005.

¹³⁰ Wagner, Steven. “Will America Bury the Hatchet?” p.14.

¹³¹ Ibid., p.10.

The American Catholic Today

American Catholics today are a mix of many different backgrounds and histories. They can be broken down by age, adherence to Church doctrine, Mass attendance, class, geographical location and ethnicity. With such strong beliefs and a wide variety of backgrounds, Catholics are often referred to as politically homeless, even by the Church itself. It is difficult to find a political party and candidate that shares consistent Catholic values in all areas.¹³² Economic issues tend to pull to the left, while social issues tend to pull Catholics to the right—leaving about 40 percent of today’s Catholics acting as a swing vote.^{133,134}

There are roughly 65 million American Catholics squeezed into one political demographic, and many scholars and political consultants have tried to describe this group and fit their characteristics into a few sentences.¹³⁵ Steven Wagner, who has carefully studied the Catholic voter, attempts to describe in five points the heart and mind of the Catholic voter today in the U.S.:

Heart of the Voter

1. Large majority of Catholics perceive the country to be in a crisis of declining morality.
2. Large majority regard Washington as exacerbating the moral crisis.
3. Nearly half of Catholic voters are today swing voters and can’t be taken for granted by either party.
4. New political orientation has emerged among Catholics—particularly among Mass attending Catholics—called “social renewal” conservatism, grounded in the widespread Catholic perception of a cultural and social crisis.

¹³² “Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility.” Washington D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. September 2003.

¹³³ Thomma.

¹³⁴ Hudson, Deal. “Catholics and the GOP.” Crisis. February 2000. p.6

¹³⁵ “Bush Outlines Appeal to Catholic Voters.” Catholic World News. 4 August 2004.
<http://cwnnews.com/news/viewstory.cfm?recnum=31273>. 21 January 2005.

5. The emergence of this “social renewal” orientation among active Catholics may possibly set the stage for further electoral gains by the right sort of conservative candidates.

Mind of the Voter

1. Growing number of self-identified conservatives among active Catholics
2. Exodus of all Catholics, but especially active Catholics, out of the Democratic Party.
3. Increasing propensity of active Catholics to vote Republican.
4. Increasing share of the electorate represented by active Catholics.
5. Sharp divergence in the political behavior between religiously active and inactive Catholics.¹³⁶

Wagner’s analysis only begins to speak to the current trends among today’s Catholics.

As many have concluded, “Catholics, as Catholics, are no longer a cohesive political force and approach them as several separate groups with different political hot buttons.”

All self-identifiable Catholics today are not the same voting bloc.

Active and Inactive Catholics

The best way to politically break down the Catholic vote into something tangible is by comparing active voters to inactive voters; “by the 21st century, America had developed a politics based on cultural identity in which religion correlated with voting behavior more than any other demographic variable. But religion not just in terms of denomination but in degree of observance.”¹³⁷ Generally, active Catholics are those that attend Mass at least once a week, thus making them the easiest to group together and target, for they tend to vote on similar issues and allow themselves to be guided by similar sources. However, one should not discount the role of the inactive voter, who although not a practicing Catholic, still self-identifies with some part of the Catholic faith. To understand the breakdown of Catholics using this measurement, one must look

¹³⁶ Wagner, Steven. “Catholics and Evangelicals—Can they be Allies?” *Crisis*. January 2000, p.13.

¹³⁷ Barone, p.xx.

at Mass attendance levels over the years, what percentage of the population are active Catholics, how active Catholics vote in comparison to other active Christians, and how the active Catholic vote has shifted over time.

As Mass attendance dropped dramatically in the 1970s, a split arose between active and inactive Catholics. This demographic divide can be partially attributed to a national religious decline, caused by social unrest, a cultural shift and a move away from established authority. The chart below illustrates a split developing in the 1970s, when weekly Mass attendance dropped below half of all Catholics. Around the 1990s, Mass attendance stabilized around 45 percent.¹³⁸

Portion of Catholics who Attend Mass Regularly

<i>Year</i>	<i>Yes = Active</i>	<i>No = Inactive</i>
1960	73%	27%
1964	64%	36%
1968	61%	39%
1972	51%	49%
1976	47%	53%
1980	50%	50%
1984	43%	57%
1988	40%	60%
1992	47%	53%
1996	46%	54%

¹³⁹

Even though the amount of American Catholics has increased, the group of active Catholics has decreased. This cultural change has altered the way American Catholics vote as a whole and has split the group into two types of Catholics, as one half of the religion is clearly more involved and making Catholicism a priority in their life.

The difference in inactive and actives' level of Mass attendance affects more than just one's connection to the parish, but has political implications as well. Looking at the

¹³⁸ Novak, p.31.

¹³⁹ Wagner, Steven. "The Catholic Political Identity." P.27.

data for all faiths and how their religious service attendance affects their voting patterns, it is clear that the more often one attends church, the more an individual is likely to vote Republican. Kerry's votes however, grow reciprocal to church attendance.

**Church Attendance and Voting Patterns
in 2004 (all faiths)**

<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Bush</i>	<i>Kerry</i>
more than once a week	64%	35%
Weekly	58%	41%
Monthly	50%	49%
few times a year	45%	54%
Never	36%	62%

¹⁴⁰

It is also significant that over time, a greater percentage of the Republican candidate's vote has come from religiously active voters:

**Percent of GOP vote
coming from Religiously
Active voters**

<i>Year</i>	<i>%</i>
1960	11%
1964	30%
1968	30%
1972	68%
1976	35%
1980	50%
1984	55%
1988	45%
1992	35%
1996	50%
2000	60%

¹⁴¹

Clearly a relationship has formed between the actively religious community and the Republican Party. Thus, the split between active and inactive Catholics has created a natural divide in voting patterns.

¹⁴⁰ Zapor, Patricia. "End of the Catholic Vote? Other Categories may Predict Election Better." *Catholic News Service*. 9 November 2004.

¹⁴¹ Wagner, Steven. "Will America Bury the Hatchet?" p.12.

Active Catholics today tend to vote Republican, and Pew data shows active Catholics are positioned between active evangelical and active mainline Protestants in their political ideologies and voting trends.¹⁴² In 1972, 55 percent of evangelicals considered themselves conservative and only 36 percent of active Catholics did. However, by 1999, 55 percent of active evangelicals and 50 percent of active Catholics claimed to be conservative.¹⁴³ While active Catholics today do not vote in the once solid blocs as witnessed by Kennedy or Smith, they still have distinctive qualities and vote by their religious views, especially on social issues.¹⁴⁴ Active Catholics are more likely than inactives to vote according to Church doctrine and to rate abortion as one of the main issues affecting their vote. Although active Catholics do not fit into one social or economic class, they seem to possess a similar worldview. Their focus is primarily on the moral decline in our society; thus they stick to the conservative stance on abortion, school choice and school prayer—all positions that simultaneously keep active Catholics from voting Democrat.¹⁴⁵ While issues such as war and peace and the economy remain on the voter's radar, they do not trigger the same response, as there is not as clear of a link between these issues and the diminishing moral fabric of society. Wagner makes some generalizations about active Catholics and their typical viewpoints:

distinctively patriotic, not necessarily pro-military, not anti-government, not in favor of unbridled free markets, tolerant and do not savor political villains, concerned about the plight of the poor, yet overwhelmingly support recent welfare reforms, opposed to job quotas and other elements of affirmative action that

¹⁴² Ponnuru, Ramesh. "Catholics are Swingers." *National Review*. 1 December 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

¹⁴³ Wagner, Steven. "Catholics and Evangelicals—Can they be Allies?" *Crisis*. January 2000. p.14.

¹⁴⁴ Novak, p.32.

¹⁴⁵ Novak, p.32.

offend the American ideal of equality, and accept the existence of an absolute standard of morality.¹⁴⁶ Clearly, the GOP does not embody all of their political views, but as long as abortion related issues remain the most emphasized by the Church, active Catholics will tend to vote Republican.

Active Catholics make up 17 percent of the electorate, while Catholics as a whole are around a quarter of the population. For comparison, four and a half percent of the electorate is Latino Catholic and a little over nine and a half percent is African American Protestant—two heavily Democratic groups that together are about as large as the active Catholic vote. Active mainline Protestants are 16 percent and active evangelicals are 26 percent of the population, voting mostly for conservative candidates.¹⁴⁷

The other half of modern Catholics seem to stand out less and fall more in line with the average U.S. citizen. According to some, “inactive Catholics are an amorphous blob, undetectable from the rest of the electorate and certainly not classifiable as a voting bloc to be courted.”¹⁴⁸ However, while this group may not listen to the bishops or priests to the same extent as actives, the fact that they still self-identify as Catholics means they must hold onto some form of their Catholicism. This inactive group tends to be more of the cafeteria Catholic mentality, picking and choosing what parts of their Catholicism to which they will still adhere. Clearly, as this section of Catholics is not in Mass every Sunday, inactives are not likely to be influenced by priests, Vatican statements or Church documents read to the congregation. Furthermore, as many Catholics stopped attending Mass around the 1970s, it tended to be the more liberal, free-thinking individuals that

¹⁴⁶ Wagner, Steven. “The Catholic Political Identity.” p.26.

¹⁴⁷ Bottum.

¹⁴⁸ Novak, p.32.

made up this group. Inactive Catholics are much more likely to vote Democrat because they focus on economic issues with liberal solutions, and are more inclined to disagree with the Church on social issues. In 2000, Gore courted the inactive, cafeteria Catholic vote by engaging their support of more liberal social programs that related to Church teachings on poverty.¹⁴⁹ Overall, this group of Catholics does not have as identifiable characteristics as the active Catholics, since they tend to be less influenced by the Church and often blend in with the average voter.

Social Justice and Social Renewal

Somewhat related to the split between inactive and active Catholics is another system to divide Catholics for determination of voting patterns. The Catholic Church fosters two different philosophies: social justice, which is socially liberal, and social renewal, which is socially conservative.

Many of the ideas of social justice stem from the 1970s, a time when a divide grew between liberal and conservative Catholics.¹⁵⁰ The theory of social justice takes on a theme of promoting a global community which will bring peace and social change to the marginalized. Social justice focuses on the injustices in the world as well as human rights violations. Overall, it is based on the idea that each individual must reach out to others. The very ideals of the social justice model are clearly liberal—“America has not provided opportunities to minorities and the poor, that there ought to be preferences for race and gender in hiring, that government is the first place to look for solutions, and that

¹⁴⁹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.331.

¹⁵⁰ Bottum.

tolerance is a virtue needed more today than courage.”¹⁵¹ A description of the typical liberal Catholic gives the picture of a social justice Catholic as well:

Strong on social justice and squishy on the war in Iraq. They are unambiguously opposed to abortion, but the recognition that a reverence for life requires contemplation of other issues, particularly the death penalty. They can always come up with a fitting quotation from St. Francis de Sales Introduction to the Devout Life when they have to, and they read most of Graham Greene’s novels. They’re Irish, they went to Jesuit schools, and every one of them has a sister or a cousin who was a Maryknoll nun until she resigned from the convent in 1979 and began to teach women’s studies at a college in upstate New York.¹⁵²

While about a third of Catholics take on this perspective and theory, it is definitely the minority and more prevalent among inactive Catholics. About 71 percent of inactives adhere to social justice; of all Catholics in general about 9 percent are hard core social justice, 26 percent slightly more to the social justice side, 37 percent slightly anti-social justice and 28 percent definitely against it.¹⁵³ Thus, the social justice theories provide a stable target audience for liberal candidates, such as John Kerry, to promote himself to Catholics.

In opposition to the idea of social justice is the conservative philosophy of social renewal that stems from the belief that society is on a downward spiral. The social renewal philosophy calls for a return to morality and virtue. It views the 1970s not as a positive period in history, but a time when morality was discarded. Social renewal theories seek to cleanse society of that which promotes evil and to discourage activities which hinder salvation. The theory of social renewal resulted from the cultural changes of the 1970s; it strives for a return to the moral society which seemed present in older times. Social renewal Catholics are those who “typically believe that private solutions

¹⁵¹ McGurn, p.118.

¹⁵² Bottum.

¹⁵³ Ibid, p.27.

are better than government ones, who oppose quotas and preferences in hiring, who think the American experiment has been largely good to minorities and the poor, and who find courage in short supply.”¹⁵⁴ While this theory covers about 62 percent of all Catholics, as 27 percent are definitely in favor and 35 percent somewhat in favor, it can definitely be found more among active Catholics because about 73 percent of those who attend weekly Mass identify with the social renewal theory.¹⁵⁵ This group is a stable section of Catholics for conservative Republicans to cater to; it is also a crucial group as the undecided Catholic voters tend to be 63 percent in favor of the social renewal agenda and even more, 67 percent, opposed to social justice theories.¹⁵⁶

Minorities in American Catholicism

Another clear division between Catholics today that correlates to voting patterns relates to the voter’s ethnicity, and has nothing to do with Mass attendance or social theories. While white Catholics were once the minority group in America, today Hispanic Catholics perceive themselves as the oppressed ethnic group and vote strongly Democrat, much like the Catholics in the early 20th century. Hispanics are 80 percent Catholic, and they tend to be economically liberal and socially conservative.¹⁵⁷ Hispanic Catholics settled mostly in Democratic areas and more than 70 percent register as Democrats, the one exception being Cuban Americans who, because of their experience with Communism, register over 70 percent Republican.¹⁵⁸ This breakdown of the Hispanic vote is applicable to the 2004 election, as both sides fought hard for this

¹⁵⁴ McGurn, 18.

¹⁵⁵ Wagner, Steven. “Social Renewal Catholics.” p.24-25.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p.27.

¹⁵⁷ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.310.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p.310.

demographic. Kerry worked to keep the Hispanic Catholic vote by appealing to their economically liberal side and emphasizing his Catholic background; yet Bush tried to appeal to their socially conservative and religious sides.

The Current Issues

Looking over the history of American Catholics as well as the divisions within Catholicism today, it is clear that the particular issues of each presidential election greatly influence which way Catholics vote, especially the Catholic swing voters. Political consultant Dick Morris agreed that “issues determine the outcome of elections.”¹⁵⁹ And while there were many issues in 2004 upon which active Catholics took an identifiable stand, there seems to be less of these issues than in the past, as well as a continued drift from Church teachings, making it harder to separate the Catholic voter from the general population.¹⁶⁰

Issues of war and peace are important to Catholics and came into play in the 2004 election, specifically regarding the war in Iraq. This topic raised mixed emotions, as religion specifically teaches peace as opposed to violence. However, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) stated that “The United States, working with the international community, must also make the sustained commitment necessary to help bring stability, democracy, freedom, and prosperity to Iraq and Afghanistan.”¹⁶¹ However, because Catholic teaching also calls on countries to first exhaust all means to prevent war, the USCCB stated that they “have raised serious moral concerns and

¹⁵⁹ Wagner, Steven. “The Catholic Political Identity.” p.25.

¹⁶⁰ Barone, p.xx.

¹⁶¹ “Faithful Citizenship.” p.15.

questions about preemptive or preventative use of force.”¹⁶² The Church is always on the side of protecting life, and obviously, war destroys many lives; but at the same time, war can end injustice and death and “all nations have a right and duty to defend human life and the common good against terrorism, aggression, and similar threats.”¹⁶³ Because this issue was somewhat grey in the Church’s view, it did not receive the kind of attention to vault it towards the top of the list.

Issues where the Church presented a clear answer were more significant topics; in 2004, the issues of abortion and gay marriage rose to the surface. Eighty-four percent of actives believed abortion was morally unacceptable, and only 25 percent believed it should be available for any reason.¹⁶⁴ The issue of abortion had been stressed by the Church for decades and was not about to be dropped.

While abortion has been a big issue in the past few decades, gay marriage suddenly rose to the political forefront in 2004. 62 percent of active Catholics believed that homosexual acts were morally unacceptable, 26 percent believed they should not be tolerated, yet 91 percent believed homosexuals should not be subject to employment discrimination.¹⁶⁵ While the majority of Catholics did not believe it is a morally acceptable lifestyle, even more do not tolerate discrimination, making it a non-political issue for so many years. However, it became a bigger issue in 2004 when states were pressured to recognize homosexual marriage, an idea that 70 percent of Catholics were

¹⁶² Ibid., p.9-10.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p.9.

¹⁶⁴ Wagner, Steven. “Catholics and Evangelicals—Can they be Allies?” p.17.

¹⁶⁵ Wagner, Steven. “Catholics and Evangelicals—Can they be Allies?” p.17.

opposed to.¹⁶⁶ The conservatives Catholics did not view the anti-gay marriage position as punishment or discrimination. Rather, Catholics hold sacred the sacrament of Marriage and strongly believed it was only between a man and a woman—“homosexuality would be a non-issue for active Catholics were it not for the radical agenda of homosexual advocates to legalize gay marriage and adoption.”¹⁶⁷ As the USCCB stated, “marriage must be protected as a lifelong commitment between a man and a woman and our laws should reflect this principle.”¹⁶⁸ These heated cultural issues of gay marriage and abortion received so much attention that they would be a determining factor in the voting patterns of American Catholics in 2004.

Political Breakdown

Catholics, with their unusual combination of ideology, have an overall political breakdown of 40 percent conservative, 36 percent moderate and 21 percent liberal. However, the religiously active Catholics lean much more to the right with 47 percent conservative, 35 percent moderate and only 14 percent liberal.¹⁶⁹ However, of Catholics as a whole, those 21 percent that call themselves liberal reliably vote Democrat, yet only 23 percent of Catholics are reliable Republicans, leaving 39 percent as a swing vote and 18 percent typically not voting. Of active Catholics, 39 percent are swing voters as well, with a slightly higher number—30 percent—voting Republican on a regular basis.¹⁷⁰ Conservative Catholics vote Republican on a much less consistent basis than liberal Catholics vote Democrat. Yet, this leaves a large percentage of the swing vote as a self-

¹⁶⁶ Wagner, Steven. “Social Renewal Catholics.” p.28.

¹⁶⁷ Wagner, Steven. “Catholics and Evangelicals—Can they be Allies?” p.17.

¹⁶⁸ “Faithful Citizenship.” p.10.

¹⁶⁹ Wagner, Steven. “Social Renewal Catholics.” *Crisis*. June 1999. p.27.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*.

identified conservative, giving an advantage to the Republicans. Furthermore, swing voters who are inactive, tend to be more on par with the typical American swing voter rather than the traditional Catholic voter.

When looking at all the major issues and opinions of the Church, Catholics clearly do not fit on the political spectrum: they lean to the right on abortion, euthanasia, cloning, marriage, school choice, media regulations, economic freedom, initiative, private property, child tax credits, affirmative action, faith-based groups and social security; they lean to the left on nuclear weapons, land mines, global arms trade, death penalty, just wages, jobs for all, right to unionize, affordable and available health care, lack of affordable housing, sustainable agriculture, immigration and the United Nations.¹⁷¹

Catholics' political ideology that combines both liberal and conservative ideas explains their awkward political divisions. For example, Catholics tend to uphold the ideals of individual responsibility, yet at the same time reject the idea of individualism: 64 percent of active Catholics believe it is "more important to be a cooperative person who works well with others" than it is to be "a self-reliant person able to take care of oneself." Yet at the same time, 74 percent of active Catholics say that "people should take responsibility for their own lives and economic well-being and not expect other people to help."¹⁷² Regarding the Catholics' view of the role of government, 73 percent of active Catholics believe it is the government's duty to do away with poverty, yet a majority of active Catholics also believe that it is not a legitimate function of the

¹⁷¹ "Faithful Citizenship."

¹⁷² Wagner, Steven. "Catholics and Evangelicals—Can they be Allies?" p.15.

government to attempt to narrow the income gap by redistributing incomes.¹⁷³ While Catholics are not anti-government, they do believe that our government has done more to hurt than help the current moral decline, and that there is value in individual responsibility.¹⁷⁴ These seemingly contradictory beliefs that Catholics hold stem from the Catholic tradition that “historically values and respects the positive role of government in coordinating human action toward justice and the common good and in using the law to educate by pointing out the right way to act,” as opposed to the more negative Protestant view which focuses on government’s role in punishing those who have done wrong.¹⁷⁵ Clearly Catholics have an ideology that does not neatly fit into one party, thus explaining their political shifting due to changing parties and issues.

Conclusion

Considering all the different dynamics that would surround the Catholic vote in 2004, it is no wonder that the 2004 election “saw some of the most passionate involvement by Catholics, including Democrats, in the political process in a number of different ways.”¹⁷⁶ Further adding to the situation was the Democrats’ nomination of only the third Catholic presidential candidate; however, this would be the first time that the Catholic candidate could not rely on solid support from American Catholics.¹⁷⁷ The statistics going into the election showed the Catholic vote divided exactly between the candidates—active American Catholics were registered 44 percent Democrat and 41 percent Republican, yet in polls, Catholics supported Bush over Kerry 49 to 40

¹⁷³ Wagner, Steven. “Catholics and Evangelicals—Can they be Allies?” p.17.

¹⁷⁴ Wagner, Steven. “Social Renewal Catholics.” p.23.

¹⁷⁵ Cochran, p.7-8.

¹⁷⁶ Schmalz, p.1.

¹⁷⁷ Thomma.

percent.¹⁷⁸ The outcome of the Catholic vote would clarify the current and future direction and trends of the American Catholic voter.

¹⁷⁸ Bottum.

The Church's Role in Presidential Elections

Despite being a religious institution, the Catholic Church does in fact have an affect on American politics. Many outside the Church believe that the Roman Catholic Church should not be involved in politics. However, the USCCB claims there is value in their participation: “our nation is enriched and our tradition of pluralism is enhanced, not threatened, when religious groups contribute their values to public debates.”¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, as stated by Bishop Michael Sheridan, the idea of the separation of church and state in no way implies “that the well-formed conscience of religious people should not be brought to bear on their political choices.”¹⁸⁰

While the Church itself cannot endorse candidates, it can influence parishioners around the country. Church documents educate Catholics that it is their duty to be politically active and to ensure that morals are upheld in society. Clearly, Catholics are listening, as only about 18 percent regularly stay home from the polls. Although the Church does not tell Catholics who to vote for, it does take a stance on issues and helps guide the conscience of voters. However, the Catholic hierarchy is known for its ambiguous statements that leave many confused about how to vote in accordance with Catholicism. Messages and statements are issued from the Vatican, bishops, and priests, each slightly different and taking on its own role. The overall effectiveness of the Church's attempt to guide the Catholic voter's conscience is debatable, although certain factors increase the level of influence.

¹⁷⁹ “Faithful Citizenship.” p.5.

¹⁸⁰ Sheridan, Most Reverend Michael J. Bishop of Colorado Springs. “A Pastoral Letter to the Faithful of the Diocese of Colorado Springs on the Duties of Catholic Politicians and Voters. <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/capoluot.htm>. 14 March 2005.

The Call to Participation

The Church's role is to encourage Catholics to be politically active and to vote according to their Catholic values, which are developed by a well-informed conscience. Pope John XXIII said in 1963, of the Catholic's responsibility: "Once again we deem it opportune to remind our children of their duty to take an active part in public life, and to contribute towards the attainment of the common good of the entire human family as well as to that of their own political community."¹⁸¹ This message holds true today as well, and in late 2003 the USCCB released a statement that "in the Catholic tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue; participation in the political process is a moral obligation."¹⁸² Catholics are called upon to be politically involved because it is the duty of the faithful to serve the least among them—something that cannot be separated in today's world from the political system of laws and public policy.^{183,184} Catholics are called to utilize their various levels of influence to further the ministries of Christ, "and God will hold each of us accountable—from the average voter to senators and presidents—for how well we have used our political power to serve the common good and the human person."¹⁸⁵ The precise role one must play depends upon one's circumstances and profession. The more politically inclined are called to represent the Catholic community by spending a greater deal of time making informed decisions and

¹⁸¹ Cochran, p.2.

¹⁸² "Faithful Citizenship." p.5.

¹⁸³ Cochran, p.1.

¹⁸⁴ Gam, Richard. *Politics and Religious Authority: American Catholics Since the Second Vatican Council*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

¹⁸⁵ Chaput, Most Reverend Charles J. Archbishop of Denver. "How to Tell a Duck from a Fox." <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/duckfox.htm>. 14 March 2005. p.2.

seeing that they are carried out.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, there are various areas and means of political involvement, explaining the multitude of movements and organizations within the Catholic community.¹⁸⁷ The Church calls upon the laity to become involved and represent the Catholic values, as the Church itself cannot be partisan. An example of lay involvement was former Boston Mayor, Ray Flynn, who during the 2004 election spoke out to Catholics asking them to vote for the pro-life candidate. Flynn commented on his role, saying that, “it’s not the intention to make the Church or the Bishops more political, but to make lay Catholics more involved.”¹⁸⁸

Informing the Voter’s Conscience, Not Voter Instruction

Political involvement depends upon the Church’s obligation to inform and guide Catholics’ consciences so that voters can make decisions that best represent the values they are called to live by. While the Church would never tell people who to vote for, it has the right to pass onto Catholics the doctrine of the Church so that the voters have an informed conscience. As stated by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith in the “Doctrinal Notes on some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life,”

By its intervention in this area, the Church’s magisterium does not wish to exercise political power or eliminate the freedom of opinion of Catholics regarding contingent questions. Instead it intends as its proper function—to instruct and illuminate the consciences of the faithful, particularly those involved

¹⁸⁶ Cochran, p.4-5.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p.xii.

¹⁸⁸ Reilly, Fr. Michael. “Bishops Prove Key to Mobilizing Catholic Vote.” Newsmax.com 17 November 2004. <http://www.newsmax.com/scripts/printerfriendly.pl?page=http://www.newsmax.com/archives.htm>. 14 March 2005.

in political life, so that their actions may always serve the integral promotion of the human person and the common good.¹⁸⁹ The Church uses “broad principles, and basic moral commitments” along with the Word of God and the teachings of the Church to give Catholic voters a consistent moral basis upon which to study candidates.^{190,191}

Not only is it the obligation of Roman Catholics to learn the teachings of the Church, but it is the Catholic duty to vote according to one’s conscience, especially in regards to moral laws.¹⁹² While the actual decisions on how to vote are left up to each individual, “the right judgment of conscience is not a matter of personal preference nor has it anything to do with feelings. It has only to do with objective truth.”¹⁹³ Therefore, while one is free to vote however he chooses, there are absolute morals that must be applied, and one cannot alter them according to personal beliefs or use an uninformed conscience as an excuse. As the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith states, “it must be noted that 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.”¹⁹⁴ This seemingly contradictory message causes confusion, as the Church states it does not instruct how to vote, yet at the same time gives absolute moral issues that must be considered.

¹⁸⁹ Sheridan, Most Reverend Michael J. Bishop of Colorado Springs. “A Pastoral Letter to the Catholic Faithful of the Diocese of Colorado Springs on the Duties of Catholic Politicians and Voters.” <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/capoluot.htm>. 14 March 2005.

¹⁹⁰ Cochran, x.

¹⁹¹ “Faithful Citizenship.” p.6.

¹⁹² Burke, Most Reverend Raymond. Bishop of La Crosse. “On the Dignity of Human Life and Civic Responsibility.” 23 November 2003. <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/burkeciv.htm>. 14 March 2005.

¹⁹³ Sheridan.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

Although it lays out absolute morals and doctrines, the Church is careful not to put guidelines into direct application, for it “recognizes the danger of reducing that teaching to a detailed policy platform that would distort and trivialize the Catholic tradition, as well as cripple the open-ended process of reflection, dialogue, and experimentation that wise political judgment requires.”¹⁹⁵ It is up to the Catholic voter to use his best judgment based on his conscience to determine which policies will promote the values each person is called to live by. The Church’s role is simply to inform voters of the morals and teachings that decisions should be based on, and leave the final decision up to the individual.

The Church is careful to maintain their neutral position and to avoid direct political questions. When Church officials are asked who they are voting for, they usually dance around the question. During Bush’s visit to Chicago, Cardinal Francis George was in attendance and commented that he was pleased by the attention Bush paid to the issue of poverty. Yet, when asked who the best candidate was, he smiled and said “You think I’m going to answer that?”¹⁹⁶ In general, the Church uses the pulpit to teach the faithful about morals, values and Catholic teaching, not the correct way to vote. The Church walks the fine line between developing the voter and instructing the voter. As written in the USCCB’s guide on Catholic Political Responsibility, “as an institution, we

¹⁹⁵ Cochran, x.

¹⁹⁶ Zeleny, Jeff. “In Texas, Bush Woos Catholics.” *Chicago Tribune*. Online Edition. 4 August 2004. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-040804034,1,4870304.story?ctrack-1&cset=true>. 11 January 2005.

are called to be political but not partisan....The Church is called to be principled but not ideological....The Church is called to be engaged by not used.”¹⁹⁷

Taking a Stance on Issues

While the Church will not endorse candidates, sometimes it does speak out about specific issues rather than basic moral guidelines. Yet, this is not instruction by the Church on how to vote, but simply issues on which candidates’ opinions should be assessed.¹⁹⁸ For example, the Bishop of Arlington, Virginia instructed his diocese on how to weigh the different issues and made sure they were aware of their responsibilities as Catholic voters.¹⁹⁹ Catholics however do not have an easy task in applying teachings, for the Church takes many unpopular positions and desires to shed light on issues that the average American would rather leave in the dark.²⁰⁰ The views of the Catholic Church straddle political parties and political candidates, leaving the voter with a tough job of determining how to apply their faith.

The Church also strives to not turn individuals into one issue voters, but rather to consider the larger picture. Thomas Kopfensteiner, a Fordham University moral theologian, wrote in the Jesuit magazine, *America*, that “it is foreign to the Church’s moral tradition to claim that one issue alone...should determine how a voter votes.”²⁰¹ The Vatican instructs Catholics to consider all issues and all of the Church’s doctrine before making a decision—Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Vatican’s Arbiter of Matters

¹⁹⁷ “Faithful Citizenship.” p.16.

¹⁹⁸ Thavis, John. “Cardinal Seeks Study of Major Issues, not Telling People how to Vote.” *Catholic News Service*. 27 April 2004.

¹⁹⁹ O’Beirne, Kate. “Catholics for Bush.” *National Review*. 29 November 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

²⁰⁰ Cochran, xii.

²⁰¹ “Theologian says One-Issue Voting is Foreign to Catholic Tradition.” *Catholic News Service*. 25 October 2004.

of Faith and Doctrine under Pope John Paul II, stated that “it is not necessarily sinful for Catholics to consider all aspects of a public official’s record, and not just his or her stance on abortion, before casting their votes.”²⁰² Catholics are given moral guidelines and often important issues with which to apply the guidelines, and are then expected to vote accordingly.

The Life Issue: Abortion

While the Church upholds its rules that it will not tell voters how to vote and will remain ambiguous on the direct application of Catholic teaching, when it comes to abortion and the issue of life, the Church is often extremely direct. Furthermore, a pro-choice Catholic candidate, John Kerry, heightened the explicitness of the hierarchy’s statements, both towards voters and Catholic candidates.

The most prominent issue raised in recent elections is the issue of life, and it is given grave importance within the Church. While one cannot ignore that the promotion of the culture of life extends into various specific issues—

The Holy Father condemns indifference to poverty, ignorance, and other impediments to the full development of the human person. He calls attention to the respects in which materialism, consumerism and sexual immorality assault human dignity and contribute to the culture of death. And he praises both ‘a new sensitivity ever more opposed to war as an instrument for the resolution of conflicts between peoples’ and the ‘growing public opposition to the death penalty.’²⁰³

--the most significant and discussed issue when dealing with the culture of life is abortion. The issue of life becomes the foremost issue, even to the extent where the Church places it above others and reminds the faithful that “not all issues are of equal

²⁰² Farrell, John Aloysius. “Kerry Cites Catholic-Vote Record.” *The Denver Post*. 19 October 2004. Final Edition: A10. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

²⁰³ George, Robert P. “The Pope Gets Political.” *Crisis*. October 1996. p.21.

gravity.”²⁰⁴ Archbishop Chaput of Denver reminds Catholics in a that “abortion, immigration law, international trade policy, the death penalty and housing for the poor are all vitally important issues. But no amount of calculating can make them equal in gravity.”²⁰⁵ Chaput argues that the abortion issue is paramount because without the right to life, other issues like poverty and the death penalty are non-issues.²⁰⁶ Bishop Sheridan of Colorado Springs continues on this note, stating that “the right to life is the FIRST right. This is the one right that grounds all other human rights. This is the issue that trumps all other issues.”²⁰⁷ The American Catholic Bishops have backed up these statements, stating that “abortion has become the fundamental human rights issue for men and women of good will.”²⁰⁸ Clearly, the bishops have taken a firm stance on abortion and the protection of human life, stressing its importance to voters.

The Church clarified that the right to life is a doctrinal issue that all Catholics must believe. Non-doctrinal issues are called prudential, which allows the individual room to apply his or her own views on how to best deal with the specific situation. For example, while it is doctrinal that Catholics must look out for the least among them, the impoverished, it is a prudential matter if it is better to cut taxes and increase jobs programs or to raise all wages and increase funding to entitlement programs.²⁰⁹ While most Catholics traditionally supported the Democrat’s plan on helping the poor, it was possible that Catholics could see value in the Republicans’ option as well. However,

²⁰⁴ Sheridan.

²⁰⁵ Chaput, p.2.

²⁰⁶ Farrell.

²⁰⁷ Sheridan.

²⁰⁸ George, p.20.

²⁰⁹ Ruse.

when it came to abortion, according to the Church, there was only one acceptable answer. The past twenty years of the Church's emphasis on abortion and its doctrinal status has caused many Catholic voters to vote for pro-life candidates, even if it means voting against their personal opinions on economic or foreign policy issues.

Many have tried to destroy the credibility of the Church's pro-life statements, accusing it of political involvement. However, this issue is so crucial to the Catholic Church, that "the Church insists that its moral teaching on abortion is universal, not sectarian or parochial."²¹⁰ Despite the arguments of some less-traditional Catholics that abortion has already been written into law, and each individual is still free to choose against it, the Church firmly states that the law of God is above the law of man, especially in regards to human dignity and the protection of life.²¹¹ In response to claims that Americans should be able to make a free choice and that Catholics cannot force religion upon anyone, the Church states that "freedom is never a license to kill or oppress. Rather, freedom is ordered to goodness, to justice, to human solidarity."²¹² Therefore, the Church commands its followers that each individual must fight for life and cannot justify an immoral action simply because Americans should be free to do as they please. As Bishop Aquila of Fargo, North Dakota stated,

While we may never impose the Gospel message or force someone to believe in Jesus Christ, we must always propose the truth. We can not move into negotiation, ever, with evil. As citizens, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, teaches us that we 'are obliged in conscience not to follow the directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order.' 'We must

²¹⁰ Segers, Mary C., ed. *Church Polity and American Politics: Issues in Contemporary American Catholicism*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990.

²¹¹ Aquila, Bishop Samuel J. Bishop of Fargo, ND. Homily. 3rd Sunday of Easter. Cathedral of St. Mary. 25 April 2004. <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/3suneast.htm>. 14 March 2005.

²¹² George, p.18.

obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)(Catechism of the Catholic Church 2256).²¹³

The Church clearly believes it is her duty to maintain a firm stance on life issues like abortion, despite claims of becoming too political.

The Catholic Hierarchy: Traditional Democrats

Studying the Church's strict position on abortion, it may seem at first glance that the Catholic Church is staunchly conservative. Yet, despite the hierarchy's recent and increased vocalization of socially conservative opinions on issues such as abortion, the political ideology of the American clergy is fairly liberal.²¹⁴ The Democratic Party, traditionally known as the party of the working class, is more focused on government programs that deal with welfare, living wages, affordable health care and other policies directed toward the lower class; thus, "an affiliation of Catholics with such a party would signify an ideological consistency."²¹⁵ The overall tone of the bishops often tends to be closer to that of the Democratic Party. Especially with economic issues, the Catholic Church seems to be even more liberal than the Democratic Party.²¹⁶ Some of the USCCB's documents, such as the questionnaire given to candidates to rank their adherence to Catholic morality revealed a left-leaning bias. The questions, asking about topics such as child-safety locks on handguns, increasing the minimum wage and ending corporate subsidies, forced a direct application of teachings and required a liberal answer. Kerry in fact ranked number one on the USCCB's legislative scorecard for following

²¹³ Aquila, p.2.

²¹⁴ Gam, Richard. *Politics and Religious Authority: American Catholics since the Second Vatican Council*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994. p.171.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p.113.

²¹⁶ Rossomando, John. "Why Blue-Collar Catholics won't Vote Republican." *Crisis*. July/August 2001. p.38.

Catholic doctrine, although he is pro-choice, did not vote against partial birth abortion, and is for embryonic stem cell research and human cloning.²¹⁷ Despite the Church's socially conservative viewpoints, Church leaders strongly support the Democrats on a wide range of issues. However, the Catholic hierarchy is careful to maintain a principled stance on individual issues, even if they are all over the political spectrum, while refraining from candidate endorsement or voter instruction.

The Pope's Role

The Church has many channels through which it expresses doctrinal teachings, and in some cases, opinions on prudential matters. The statements coming from Rome and the Holy Father have less bias and political commentary than the American hierarchy's statements, for those writing Vatican documents often have less vested in American politics and are not citizens themselves. Documents coming from Rome usually do not take outwardly political stances, but often quote directly from official Church doctrine, using sources such as the Catechism or the Holy Father's encyclicals.

Rome, post-Vatican II, deals with more political matters than in the past. Vatican II, which modernized the Church in many aspects, "provided ideological framework for greater Catholic political involvement," and gave the Church a greater role in political issues.²¹⁸ Instead of focusing on issues that directly affected the Church, such as school choice, Vatican II gave set the Church the ability to issue powerful statements on war, social justice and right to life issues, which often are quite critical of US policy.²¹⁹ These

²¹⁷ Ruse, Austin. "Holy Democrats." *National Review*. 15 September 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2004.

²¹⁸ Segers, p.7.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.3-4.

documents and statements that come from Rome are often utilized by local bishops, who often make them slightly more political and apply them to their diocese,

Pope John Paul II also saw it as his responsibility to be involved in global affairs, establishing relationships with leaders such as Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. The pontiff turned to world affairs to ensure justice and dignity for all; “the pope is no quietest, however, and his evangelism is shaped by the conviction that Christian truth has an inescapably public character.”²²⁰ Believing that “man cannot be separated from God, nor politics from morality,” the Holy Father’s desire for a moral renewal, led him to reach out to the political realm to impress change.²²¹ He reinvented the political function of the Church, publicly establishing the importance of a moral culture to smooth over the rough spots of democracies and free markets in order to better serve human dignity.²²² Pope John Paul II released documents such as “Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Public Life” to help guide Catholics in their search to return morality to public life.²²³

Overall, Vatican City and the Catholic Church grew increasingly conservative in the past two decades under Pope John Paul II, who strengthened the Church’s controversial positions on birth control and abortion, and worked to reverse the more liberal decisions of Pope John XXIII.²²⁴ He continued to move the Church to the right by appointing theologically conservative bishops, who played a role in the election of an

²²⁰ Weigel, p.86.

²²¹ Chaput, p.1.

²²² Weigel, p.88.

²²³ Chaput, p.2.

²²⁴ Barone, xviii.

equally conservative successor.²²⁵ George Weigel, from the Ethics and Public Policy Center writes that “not only has John Paul II reshaped the functions of the papacy; he has also fundamentally reoriented the Catholic intellectual encounter with modernity.”²²⁶ Pope John Paul II spoke out against moral relativism, looking to guide the Church toward a “post-modern agenda of cultural reform and renewal.”^{227,228} In the face of a global culture controlled by the “pleasure principle and...utility,” the Holy Father looked to guide world leaders and Catholics around the world by calling for a return to morality.

Despite the Pope’s involvement in political affairs, the Vatican is careful not to release politicized statements, especially around election time. For example, when questioned about the Church’s formal stance on the Iraq war, the only response from the Vatican was, “Did you read the address of the Pope to President Bush? Read it again.”²²⁹ John Paul II’s words had simply been over his “grave concern” regarding what was occurring in Iraq and his wish for “normalization as quickly as possible.”²³⁰ Clearly, Pope John Paul II’s statements remain quite ambiguous election time. The Vatican not only sidestepped questions on the war, but also those regarding Catholics voting for a pro-choice candidate. Vatican spokesman, Joaquin Navarro-Valls stated that “The Holy See never gets involved in electoral or political questions directly.”²³¹

However, the Pope continually expressed his opinions on abortion, and the grave responsibility of Catholics to promote the dignity of life from conception to natural death.

²²⁵ Gam, p.71.

²²⁶ Weigel., p.88.

²²⁷ Chaput, p.1.

²²⁸ Weigel, p.88.

²²⁹ “Vatican Handbook Offers Political Stances.” *Newsmax.com* 25 October 2004.

<http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2004/10/25/163923.shtml>. 11 January 2005. p.2.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.2.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p.1.

The Pope's strong and forceful words have an affect on rank and file Catholic voters, who hold the Holy Father in high regards. Catholics continually heard the Pope's views on the issue, hammering the beliefs into their minds. Leading up to the US Presidential election in November, the pontiff continued to remind voters the importance of political action in favor of life. In his *Evangelium Vitae*, he stated that "although laws are not the only means of protecting human life, nevertheless they do play a very important and sometimes decisive role in influencing patterns of thought and behavior."²³² Pope John Paul II asked Americans to reject the culture of death and the individualistic idea of freedom "which ends up becoming the freedom of 'the strong' against 'the weak.'"²³³ Many of the pontiff's statements are broad and can be applied to many areas and issues, yet on abortion, he makes his views clear. The Holy Father also that the issue of protecting unborn life is the most important of all current issues: "the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture—is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition of all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination."²³⁴

Taking the issue a step further than simply talking to Catholic voters, the Vatican sent a doctrinal note to Catholic politicians, informing them of their "grave and clear obligation to oppose any law that attacks human life."²³⁵ While one could interpret this as a reference to the war or the death penalty, the Pope's frequent references to abortion gave context to his otherwise ambiguous words. Also, an anonymous American Vatican

²³² George, p.21.

²³³ George, p.18.

²³⁴ Burke.

²³⁵ Tumulty, Karen and Perry Bacen Jr. "A Test of Kerry's Faith." *Time*. 5 April 2004. <http://www.time.com/time/archive/preview/0,10987,1101040405605436,00.html>. 14 March 2005.

official supposedly told *Time* magazine reporters that “people in Rome are becoming more and more aware that there’s a problem with John Kerry, and a potential scandal with his apparent profession of his Catholic faith and some of his stances, particularly abortion.”²³⁶ However, it is important to note that the official Vatican statements speak only based on Church doctrine and teachings, and it is the individuals who directly apply the words. Only in unofficial Vatican statements do Church officials find room to make direct applications to Catholic candidates.

The tradition of the papacy is revered by Catholics around the country, and Pope John Paul II was a highly respected man. There can be little doubt that the words and statements from Rome had an affect on how American Catholics, particularly practicing and Mass-attending ones, weighed particular religious teachings when casting their ballots. The Holy Father made it clear—without ever saying directly, ‘vote pro-life,’—that one must vote in such a way as to protect all stages of human life. Pope John Paul II’s personal crusade for moral renewal in society required the application of absolute morals and a rejection of moral relativism. American Catholics would listen to the words of Pope John Paul II when casting their ballots, as would US bishops, who would deliver many addresses to their flock before the election.

The Bishop’s Role

Bishops, by their religious significance as vicars of Christ, are instructed by Jesus to ‘feed my lambs...tend my sheep.’²³⁷ Thus, it is their role in representing Christ to be a

²³⁶ Tumulty.

²³⁷ Aquila, p.1.

teacher, shepard and priest.²³⁸ As Bishop Carlson of Sioux Falls told his diocese, “I have the duty to teach about human life and dignity, marriage and family, war and peace, the needs of the poor and the demands of justice.”²³⁹ Similarly, Bishop Sheridan of Colorado Springs stated that “as we prepare for these elections, I consider it my duty as your bishop to write to you about these matters so that you might go to the polls this fall with a well-informed conscience.”²⁴⁰ The USCCB encouraged Bishops to make statements and utilize the press in order to “illuminate the Church’s teaching on morality related to issues of public policy.”²⁴¹ Many of these statements, along with Vatican documents, are then passed on to the priests and deacons to read at Mass, in order to further help form parishioners’ consciences.²⁴² It is the duty of the Bishops to instruct their dioceses on the teachings of the Church, in order that Catholics vote according to their faith. As stated by the USCCB,

As bishops, we have a responsibility as Americans and as religious teachers to speak out on the moral dimensions of public life. The Catholic community enters public life not to impose sectarian doctrine but to act on our moral convictions, to share our experience in serving the poor and vulnerable, and to participate in the dialogue over our nation’s future.²⁴³

Clearly it is the bishops’ role is to be an instructor of morality and the faith, and to help ensure that one’s religious background is part of important electoral decisions.

Bishops walk a fine line between offering opinions and playing partisan politics, especially because they are closer to the voters. A Vatican spokesman stated that bishops may give their opinions in order to “illuminate the consciences of the faithful with ethical

²³⁸ Gam, p.58.

²³⁹ Carlson.

²⁴⁰ Sheridan.

²⁴¹ Gam, p.59.

²⁴² Carlson.

²⁴³ “Faithful Citizenship,” p.5.

elements so they can make a judgment.”²⁴⁴ Offering opinions and applications of Church teachings on issues is acceptable, yet taking political sides is outside of the bishops’ duties. For example, the Minnesota Archbishop was given the opportunity to publicly appear with Bush at an event, yet turned it down, because, as his spokesman said, “he is exercising great care not to influence the election in a way that looks like an endorsement or doing a favor for anyone. We are nonpartisan, and we encourage parishes not to engage in political activity.”²⁴⁵ Besides the unethical aspects of becoming involved in partisan politics, bishops recognize the danger of losing their diocese’s tax-exempt status or becoming just another special interest groups.²⁴⁶ Despite dioceses staying far from endorsing particular candidates, even the insinuation of voting on the life issue is enough to raise concerns with certain groups. Frances Kissling of Catholics for a Free Choice complained to the IRS that the Denver archdiocese “has repeatedly engaged in voter instruction by explicitly urging Catholics to vote against candidates who support abortion rights and embryonic stem cell research.”²⁴⁷ In the 2004 election, some believe the Church and bishops went too far in their statements, while others believe the bishops did not make the importance of certain issues clear enough.

Same-sex marriage and abortion received the most attention from the bishops in 2004, while the war in Iraq received little attention from most dioceses. However, it is not that the majority of bishops agreed with the war, but that they began to realize, as stated in the *Bishops’ Pastoral on Peace: The Medieval Just War in the Modern World*,

²⁴⁴ “Vatican Handbook Offers Political Stances.” p.2.

²⁴⁵ Haga, Chuck. “Church Meets State.” *Star Tribune*. 16 October 2004. Saturday Metro Edition: 1A. Lexis Nexis Online. 8 March 2005.

²⁴⁶ Segers, p.10.

²⁴⁷ Reilly.

that, in a pluralistic society, “the achievement of some of the moral goals...may entail acceptance of goals which the bishops find immoral.”²⁴⁸ Judging by the amount and frequency of statements, it seems that the bishops determined that protecting the life of the unborn and the sanctity of the family were the most crucial issues to stress within American politics at the time.

Homosexual marriage, on the ballot in 11 states, received attention from the bishops as a danger to the sacredness of marriage. Bush continually spoke of a constitutional amendment to keep marriage between a man and a woman, and Kerry, despite his opposition to the amendment, often mentioned his personal opposition to same sex marriage. Bishop Sheridan of Colorado Springs denied the claims that these measures gave basic rights to homosexuals, by boldly stating that “no one has a right to that which flies in the face of God’s own design.”²⁴⁹ Furthermore, Bishop Sheridan stated that any Catholic politician or Catholic who votes in favor of this issue puts themselves “outside the full communion of the Church and may not receive Holy Communion until they have recanted their positions and been reconciled by the Sacrament of Penance.”²⁵⁰ The anti-gay marriage statements were not as strong nationwide, but were focused in the 11 states where the amendment appeared on the ballot—which happened to be many battleground states. While it was really a state issue, the bishops’ statements on the issue encouraged socially conservative voters to the polls, who would then cast a socially conservative ballot, thus affecting national races.

²⁴⁸ Segers, p.77.

²⁴⁹ Sheridan.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

The abortion issue received a great deal of attention from the US bishops, as the winner of the 2004 presidential election would have the opportunity to appoint either pro-choice or pro-life judges to the Supreme Court.²⁵¹ Archbishop Burke continued to make the importance of this issue clear by stating that voting on other issues could not make up for casting one's ballot for a pro-choice candidate.²⁵² It was continually implied that the faithful could not vote for a pro-choice candidate when there was a choice.²⁵³ Simply being personally pro-life was not enough, as Bishops made statements saying that "we Catholics are not free to go against our consciences formed by our Catholic faith. We cannot separate what we believe privately about human life from our public statements."²⁵⁴ These statements were aimed not just at the Catholic voter, but Catholic politicians as well.

The bishops' problem with Catholic pro-choice politicians was that their public declaration of their Catholicism and simultaneous denial of doctrinal Church teachings.²⁵⁵ As stated by Bishop Carlson of Sioux Falls, "you cannot on the one hand support abortion rights and on the other be a Catholic in good standing. Likewise, you cannot offer personal opposition to abortion and then act differently in your professional life."²⁵⁶ The bishops were subtly referring to Kerry, who privately was against abortion, but believed that laws leave the decision up to the individual. However, the Church has stated in the document, *Gaudium et Spes* that "the split between the faith which many

²⁵¹ Sheridan.

²⁵² Burke.

²⁵³ Carlson.

²⁵⁴ Curtis.

²⁵⁵ Curtis.

²⁵⁶ Carlson.

profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age.”²⁵⁷ Thus, a Catholic cannot separate the morals and values of his faith from his public life and daily decisions. The USCCB’s document stated that “Catholics in politics must reflect the moral values of our faith with dear and consistent priority for the life and dignity of the human person.”²⁵⁸ Archbishop Curtis of Omaha stated that “the recent declaration from the Vatican about Catholic politicians makes this important point—Catholics are not free, if they are faithful to the Church, to take public stands against Church teaching on essential issues.”²⁵⁹ Furthermore, the bishops believed that allowing one’s beliefs and moral principles to influence political choices is not dangerous to democracy, but instead, beneficial. The bishops saw the purpose of the separation of church and state to “protect the rights of believers and religious groups to practice their faith and act on their values in public life.”²⁶⁰

While it was clear that the majority of these statements were directed at Kerry, few actually stated his name. However, this was not the first time that Catholic pro-choice candidates were chastised by American bishops. Governor Mario Cuomo and vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro were the reason for Archbishop John O’Connor of New York to proclaim, “I do not see how a Catholic in good conscience can vote for an individual expressing himself or herself in favoring abortion.”²⁶¹ Yet in 2004,

²⁵⁷ Sheridan.

²⁵⁸ “Faithful Citizenship.” p.7.

²⁵⁹ Curtis, Most Reverend Elden F. Archbishop of Omaha, NE. “The Candidacy of John Kerry: A Dilemma for Catholics in Nebraska and the Nation.” <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/Kerrdile.htm>. 14 March 2005.

²⁶⁰ Carlson.

²⁶¹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.300.

some bishops saw this as such a grave matter, that they used Kerry's name when discussing the issue;

In the light of the last few days and all of the media coverage regarding John Kerry's unambiguous support of abortion rights, his personal opposition to abortion, and his insistence on the separation of his Catholic faith from his professional life, I, as a successor of the apostles, cannot remain silent. I, as an apostle, must speak with the apostles and obey God rather than man and present to you the teaching of the Church on the proper relationship between our faith and professional life.²⁶²

Because this became more than just an issue, but an assault on the dogma of the Church, some bishops felt it necessary to use extreme measures.

One extreme measure exercised by some American bishops was to threaten pro-choice Catholic politicians with the denial of Holy Communion. St. Louis Archbishop Raymond Burke was one of the most vocal advocates of denying Kerry Communion.²⁶³ He publicly warned Kerry that while campaigning in Missouri, "not to present himself for Communion," based upon Canon Law 915 which allows the denial for "those who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin."²⁶⁴ While Kerry's own Boston Archbishop had given him the sacrament before, the Boston Archbishop soon fell in line with the other bishops, and commented that "Catholic politicians who do not vote in line with Church teachings shouldn't dare come to Communion."²⁶⁵ The official statement as of June 2004 by the US Bishops was that "all Catholics must examine their consciences and their fidelity to the moral teaching of the Church in personal and public life to see whether they are worthy to receive Communion."²⁶⁶ Cardinal Ratzinger extended this denial to

²⁶² Aquila, p.1.

²⁶³ "Vatican Handbook Offers Political Stances.", p.1.

²⁶⁴ Tumulty.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Haga.

voters as well, stating that “Catholics would be guilty of formal cooperation in evil, and so unworthy to present themselves for Holy Communion, if they were to deliberately vote for a candidate precisely because of the candidate’s permissive stance on abortion and euthanasia.”²⁶⁷

However, there was disagreement within the hierarchy over the denial of Communion to pro-choice Catholic politicians. Standing in opposition to Bishop Burke was Cardinal Theodore McCarrick of Washington, D.C., Cardinal Mahony of Los Angeles, Cardinal William Keeler of Baltimore, Archbishop Pilarczyk of Cincinnati, Bishop Tafoy of Pueblo, CO, Bishop Kicanas of Tulsa, and Bishop William Skylstad of Washington; all stated that “the Eucharist should not be used as a tool of sanction,” and therefore, they would not deny Kerry the sacrament.²⁶⁸ Also, outside of the Church hierarchy, according to an August 2004 Pew Research poll, 72 percent of American Catholics opposed denying Communion to pro-choice politicians.²⁶⁹ Thus, while Catholic citizens might have disagreed with the decision, there is no doubt that it left an impression upon voters’ minds as to how this was a truly grave issue.

Along with threatening the denial of Communion, bishops found other means to notify the Catholic faithful of the seriousness of the issue. Bishop McHugh stated that pro-choice Catholic candidates should not:

be invited to leadership positions in the diocese, parish or other Church agencies or organizations; receive any type of honor or public recognition by Church agency or organization; serve as a chairperson or committee member of major Church celebrations or events, including fundraising programs; exercise liturgical ministry or public role in the celebration of Mass or other sacraments; offer public

²⁶⁷ Carlson.

²⁶⁸ “Catholic Q & A.” *Kerry Catholics*. http://www.kerrycatholics.com/q_&_a.htm. 14 March 2005.

²⁶⁹ Haga.

lectures, gatherings, or other events where the speaker is given positive recognition or approval; speak at graduation ceremonies and so forth.²⁷⁰ While these restrictions do not contain the harshness of denying one the sacraments, they still demonstrate that the public denial of Church doctrine results in a loss of full unity with the Roman Catholic community. Bishop Aquila established the gravity of the situation by speaking on the dangers of hell caused by separating one's personal and professional life in voting for pro-abortion legislation:

Catholics who separate their faith life from their professional and social activities are putting the salvation of their souls in jeopardy. They risk the possibility of hell. Any Catholic who stands for a law of man, most especially one which is objectively evil, before a law of God, puts his or her soul in jeopardy of salvation for they cooperate with a real evil. When we do this we are more faithful to society than to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.²⁷¹

Not only did the Bishops see it their duty to inform the conscience of the voters, but also to inform voters and politicians of the grave dangers of separating one's religion from one's political decisions.

The US Bishops' Taskforce and the USCCB

The US Bishops made these decisions and statements not only individually but also as a body, both with the US Bishops Taskforce on Catholic Participation in Public Life, as well as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The political leanings of the decisions made by these organizations continually shift, depending on the current US hierarchy, the pressing issues of the election, and the strategies of the campaigns.²⁷²

The US Bishops Taskforce was established in September of 2003 to come up with guidelines for bishops when instructing their dioceses on political involvement. The

²⁷⁰ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.330.

²⁷¹ Aquila, p.2.

²⁷² Segers, p.137.

guidelines were based on a 2002 Vatican doctrinal note which “emphasized the moral duty of Catholic politicians to oppose legislation that allows legal abortion and euthanasia.”²⁷³ Cardinal McCarrick of Washington, D.C., who was opposed to denying politicians Communion, was in charge of the task force. The Task Force noted that this year “generated more discussion than perhaps every before about what it means to be a Catholic and a citizen of the United States.”²⁷⁴

Playing an even larger role was the larger body of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Beginning in 1975, the USCCB has prepared a document on “Faithful Citizenship” before each presidential election. The document’s role is to

Summarize Catholic teaching on public life and key moral issues. These reflections build on past political responsibility statements and integrate themes from a recent statement on Catholics in public life from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, as well as themes from several recent bishops’ statements, including *Living the Gospel of Life* and *A Place at the Table*.²⁷⁵

Their goal is to not only provide guidance, but to ensure that what results is a broad policy summary, not an endorsement of a particular candidate.²⁷⁶

The USCCB recognized the significance of the 2004 election, stating that “these times and this election will test us as American Catholics....We need to return to basic moral principles.”²⁷⁷ In order to do this, the USCCB offered themes and questions in order to guide both the bishops and Catholic voters. The 2004 Faithful Citizenship document focused on four areas: protecting human life, promoting family life, pursuing

²⁷³ Zapor, Patricia. “Bishops Receive Report from Task Force on Bishops, Politicians.” *Catholic News Service*. 17 November 2004. <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0406363.htm>. 17 January 2005.

²⁷⁴ Zapor.

²⁷⁵ “Faithful Citizenship.”

²⁷⁶ Segers, p.135.

²⁷⁷ “Faithful Citizenship.”

social justice and practicing global solidarity.²⁷⁸ Specifically, the topics covered in the document were Life and Dignity of the Human Person; Call to Family, Community, and Participation; Rights and Responsibilities; Option for the Poor and Vulnerable; Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers; Solidarity, and Caring for God’s Creation.²⁷⁹ Instead of offering an endorsement, the USCCB released a set of questions specific to the 2004 election (APPENDIX A) in order to lead to “less cynicism and more participation, less partisanship, and more civil dialogue on fundamental issues.”²⁸⁰

The Priest’s Role

The work of the bishops was passed down to individual parish communities, where the priest would share the teachings with his congregation. Speaking from the pulpit regarding Church statements on political involvement and important issues was not considered political activity, but rather the duty of the priest.²⁸¹ The homily had been used for political related issues before, and it was shown by pollster and CNN analyst Kelly Anne Fitzpatrick that the Sunday sermon was “the most effective education tool for informing Catholics” on important current issues.²⁸² Faithful and active Catholics attending Mass were influenced by their parish priest, for they were more likely to hear the homily than to personally research Vatican and USCCB statements.

While priests strive to remain neutral, some come across for one candidate or the other, even if they do not make explicit endorsements. For example, Father Frank Pavone is the director of the group, Priests for Life. He traveled to swing states,

²⁷⁸ Haga.

²⁷⁹ “Faithful Citizenship.”

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Carlson.

²⁸² George, p.19.

registering Catholic voters, giving talks to groups of Catholics, organizing conference calls, driving elderly Catholics to vote, and doing work usually done by political campaigns.²⁸³ Pavone skirts around losing his tax exempt status by speaking only on the issues, not the candidates, although he clearly supports Bush, as he believes that “any candidate who supports abortion has no right to hold any kind of public office.”²⁸⁴ Furthermore, Pavone has found that through his travels and meetings with priests around the nation, priests “are disgusted with Kerry.”²⁸⁵ Yet, not all priests’ statements lean to the right. Jesuit priest Fr. Kopfensteiner, gives his parishioners reasons they could vote for a pro-choice candidate:

The defense of life is not always the most urgent good....A woman on a fixed income may choose a candidate whose platform guarantees better medical care or prescription drug coverage. A father whose son is at war may support a candidate with a plan to end the conflict....These and other issues may provide a serious enough or proportionate reason to vote for one candidate over another. For a voter to be guided only by the fundamentality of human life risks falling into a radicalism that is foreign to the Catholic moral tradition.²⁸⁶

The variety of individual opinions also represents the broad range of views held by Catholic voters.

The Effects of the Church’s Role

Looking at the role of the Church during the election, the key element is the overall effect on American Catholic voters. The Church clearly had some influence on the faithful, because exit polls illustrate that campaign efforts were most successful in

²⁸³ Tokasz, Jay. “Priest Group Stresses Politics in Values Debate.” *Buffalo News*. 12 November 2004. Final Edition: A10. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ertelt, Steven. “Leading Catholic Says Most Priests will Back President Bush over John Kerry.” *Lifenews.com*. 1 November 2004. <http://www.lifenews.com/printpage.php>. 14 March 2005.

²⁸⁶ “Theologian says One Issue Voting is Foreign to Catholic Tradition.”

areas where campaigns were reinforced by Church leaders.²⁸⁷ The Jesuit magazine, *Ignatius Insight*, published a piece on the growing effects of the Catholic vote, especially due to the increased vocalization of Catholic teachings by the Church's hierarchy.²⁸⁸ One of the largest factors in whether or not Catholics listen to Church statements is the frequency of their Mass attendance and level of involvement within the Church. Gallup surveys show the reason most Catholics give for not attending Mass regularly is because of Church positions on birth control and abortion, making this demographic unlikely to listen to Church political statements on these issues.²⁸⁹ Also, the active Catholics attending Mass are more likely to hear the Church's statements from the pulpit. Sixty-two percent of active Catholics claim that they take to heart what the Pope has to say, while only 13 percent resent being told what to do. Even among inactive Catholics, 57 percent claim they take to heart the Holy Father's words.²⁹⁰ Studies show that the laity are receptive to Catholic teachings on political issues, as long as they do not feel silenced or forced into an opinion without input.²⁹¹ However, the effect of the Church on voters is naturally going to decrease with time, as the percentage of American Catholics who claim that religion is very important in their lives significantly decreases, from 83 percent in 1952 to 53 percent in 1984.²⁹² However, there has also been a marked increase in statements by the Church, potentially in order to counteract this declining trend.

²⁸⁷ Gam.

²⁸⁸ Schmalz.

²⁸⁹ Gam, p.100.

²⁹⁰ Wagner, Steven. "Social Renewal Catholics."

²⁹¹ Gam.

²⁹² Ibid., p.100.

The increase in Church statements before the 2004 election was generally surrounding social issues, especially on abortion and gay marriage; many believe that it helped sway Catholic votes to the Bush camp. Abortion has been an issue among socially conservative voters for the past few decades, impacting the vote of about 34 percent of the population on a regular basis. However, this year, nine percent of the population claimed that for the first time, abortion strongly affected their ultimate vote, proving that there was an increase in this issue's importance.²⁹³ Voters that were most likely affected by the Church's increased statements on the protection of human life included Reagan Democrats, ethnic groups, undecided active Catholics, and working class active Catholics.^{294,295,296} Richard Gam, in his study on American Catholics in politics since Vatican II, attributes the rising conservative strain within Catholicism to the influence of religious leaders.²⁹⁷

This conservative strain was clear in many of the statements made by bishops around the country. Bush increased his hold on the Catholic vote in dioceses where bishops were not afraid to boldly state Catholic voters' obligation to vote according to their morals and Catholic teachings, especially regarding life.²⁹⁸ In fact, in many of these states, Bush increased his share of the Catholic vote more than among all voters.²⁹⁹

Looking at specific examples where there were outspoken pro-life bishops, a Bush

²⁹³ Ertelt, Steven. "Poll Shows Abortion Voters Gave President Bush Twelve Percent Advantage." *Lifenews.com*. 8 November 2004. <http://www.lifenews.com/printpage.php>. 14 March 2005.

²⁹⁴ Remsen, Jim. "Bush Overwhelmingly Captures Catholic Vote." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. *Catholic Citizenship Website*. <http://www.catholicvote.org/DFWstar.php>. 20 January 2005.

²⁹⁵ Holloway, Carson. "Begging for Rebuke." *National Review*. 7 April 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

²⁹⁶ Gam, p. 112.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

²⁹⁸ Ponnuru.

²⁹⁹ O'Beirne.

advantage was clear. In Colorado, Bush jumped ten points among the Catholic votes since 2000, pulling in about 52 percent of Colorado Catholics. In Massachusetts, a strong Irish Catholic state, and also the home state of Kerry, Bush added 17 points to his margin of the Catholic vote, winning 49 percent of Catholics in Massachusetts.³⁰⁰ In Florida and Ohio, two crucial swing states, two out of three registered active Catholics voted Republican.³⁰¹ Bush only improved his nationwide share of the Catholic vote by around five percent, yet increased his shares in certain states by much greater amounts; the most logical reason for this difference in numbers can be attributed to active bishops in these particular states.³⁰² Archbishop Chaput, a firm advocate of the pro-life issue, stated that “I think the abortion issue, the marriage issue, and the contradictions built into Senator Kerry’s private views vs. his public actions had a huge impact on the way Catholics voted.”³⁰³

Conclusion

The Catholic Church, through the Vatican, bishops, and parish priests, informs Catholics of important issues, doctrines and Church teachings, which will help mold the voter’s conscience. Thus, the hierarchy guides the Catholic voter without specifically instructing him. However, on certain issues, such as abortion, the Church makes very direct statements that do not usually go unnoticed. The influence of the Church on Catholic voters should not be overlooked, as an active and vocal hierarchy does in fact have an effect on American Catholic voters.

³⁰⁰ Reilly.

³⁰¹ Schmalz.

³⁰² Reilly.

³⁰³ Schmalz.

Campaigns Target the Catholic Voter

Neither John Kerry nor George W. Bush could afford to ignore the largest religious denomination in the U.S. when such a close race was at hand. In 2004, there were around 65 million Catholics in the country, making up about a quarter of the electorate.³⁰⁴ The Catholic vote is an important group to win, as the majority of Catholics have voted for the winning candidate in the past 25 years.³⁰⁵ Furthermore, in 2000, the Catholic vote in significant battleground states went to the winner; Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Ohio, Missouri and Florida sent the majority of Catholic votes to Bush. The Catholic voters played a role again in 2004, as many states with large Catholic populations were also swing states:

States with Large Catholic Votes³⁰⁶

Bold=swing states

RI	61%
NM	60%
MA	50%
NJ	47%
NY	45%
NH	42%
ME	35%
PA	32%
AZ	33%
LA	33%
IL	34%
OH	30%
MI	30%
MN	28%
MD	28%
FL	28%
KY	27%
CO	27%
NV	27%

³⁰⁴ Hudson, Deal W. "Catholics and the GOP." p.6.

³⁰⁵ Marlin, George J. "The American Catholic Voter." p.331.

³⁰⁶ Wagner, Steven. "The Catholic Political Identity."

Clearly, the amount of battleground states with large percentage of Catholics, stressed the importance of Catholic outreach to the presidential campaigns. Catholics also have a large presence in the Midwest and Southwest where many swing states are located.³⁰⁷ While some of these are decided voters, there is a large group that is open to persuasion by either candidate.

Kerry's Catholic Campaign Structure

There was no question that John Kerry would target Catholics as one of his outreach groups. Both his own Catholicism and his affiliation with the Democratic Party granted him some immediate inroads with American Catholics. Furthermore, he stood with the Church on issues such as foreign policy, economics and the death penalty. Yet, this would not be an easy fight for only the third Catholic presidential candidate.

Despite Kerry's appeal to some Catholics, his Catholic outreach did not get going as quickly as his opponent's. While religious directors were some of the first to be hired onto the Republican team, the Kerry-Edwards camp did not bring their Director of Religious Outreach, Mary Vanderslice, on board until May of 2004.³⁰⁸ The actual Catholics for Kerry arm of the religious outreach was not established until July, a late start for anyone working against Karl Rove, who had been reaching out to the religious conservatives for four years.³⁰⁹ William D'Antonio, head of Catholics for Kerry believed that the Kerry advisors "were afraid to speak out about religion," at least until Mike

³⁰⁷ Tumulty.

³⁰⁸ Feldman.

³⁰⁹ Yonke, David. "Kerry too Slow to Woo Catholics, Activist Says." *The Blade*. 19 November 2004. <http://www.toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Date=20041119&category=News10>. 14 March 2005.

McCurry and Joe Lockhart were hired onto the campaign's staff around September.³¹⁰

However, even according to D'Antonio, Kerry had too late of a start to win the Catholic vote.³¹¹

Kerry's Catholicism

In order to capitalize on his personal religious affiliation, Kerry worked to establish a bond with his fellow Catholics around the country. However, he was not vocal about his religion until the debates started, and he finally began to mention his Catholic faith. Before the debates, the only group that really heard Kerry speak of his faith was African-American audiences.³¹² As of July, one poll illustrated that only 43 percent of Catholics realized Kerry shared their religion.³¹³ After the debates, when he spoke more freely of his faith—and after his religious team was hired—Kerry spoke of growing up Catholic, his role as an altar boy and the rosary he carried in Vietnam.³¹⁴

Kerry once spoke how his Catholic faith gave him “values to live by,” however, Democratic pollster Douglas Schoen argued that Kerry did not mention the topic enough.^{315,316} Much like Bush in 1992, Schoen commented that “the Democrats have to do what the Bush-Cheney campaign did. Frame social issues in values terms.”³¹⁷

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Gordon.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Tumulty.

³¹⁵ Campbell.

³¹⁶ Zapor, Patricia. “End of Catholic Vote? Other Categories may Predict Election Better.” *Catholic News Service*. 9 November 2004. <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0406188.htm>. 17 January 2005.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

Kerry also had the bragging rights of voting in line with the US Bishops more than any other Catholic senator.³¹⁸ However, some claim this survey to be politically biased to the left.³¹⁹ The survey looked at votes on issues such as social justice, the environment, abortion and foreign policy. Kerry voted with the bishops 61 percent of the time overall and 95 percent on domestic issues, 50 percent on international issues and only 11 percent on abortion issues. For comparison, Catholic Republican Senator Rick Santorum received a 41 percent overall score, voting with the bishops 23 percent on domestic issues, six percent on international issues and 88 percent on abortion issues.³²⁰

Kerry's Appeal to Liberal and Inactive Catholics

The religious groups with which Kerry found favor happened to be the more liberal and progressive religions. Of all religious groups, black Protestants provide him the largest amount of votes and made up around an eighth of his total vote. His top five religious groups combined provided around 37 percent of his total vote, although one must note that atheists, agnostics and seculars are included in this number as a religious group.³²¹ The five groups and the percentage of their vote that went to Kerry are black Protestants (83%), atheists/agnostics (82%), modernist mainline Protestants (78%), other faiths (77%) and Jews (73%). He also received substantial support from seculars (70%), modernist Catholics (69%), Latino Catholics (69%), unaffiliated believers (63%) and

³¹⁸ Farrell.

³¹⁹ Ruse.

³²⁰ Farrell.

³²¹ Green, John C., Corwin E. Smidt, et Al. "The American Religious Landscape and the 2004 Presidential Vote: Increased Polarization." Pew Institute. Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics Post-Election Survey. November-December 2004.

<http://www.pewforum.org/publications/surveypostelection.pdf>. 5 April 2005. p.7.

modernist evangelicals (52%).³²² Of Catholic groups, only the modernist and Latino Catholics fell strongly into Kerry's camp. It is clear that Kerry's core religious groups were the non-Christian or non-religious, ethnic Christian and modernist denominations. Other than the ethnic groups, the non-religious and modernist Christians are generally socially liberal and have ideas similar to the Catholic theory of social justice. While the ethnic groups tend to be socially conservative—hence, the Bush campaign's attempt to pull them away—they have traditionally voted Democrat for economic reasons and for the same reason many Catholic immigrants voted Democrat earlier in the century. Another Catholic group that Kerry focused efforts on was the blue collar Catholics who support the Democratic Party on issues such as aid to the poor, healthcare, welfare and union support, yet tend to be socially conservative as well.³²³

Despite the late start on specific outreach to Catholics, Kerry was able to win a majority of inactive and modernist Catholics, namely, those not practicing in full accordance and not following doctrine. He was able to appeal to these voters, as he was much like them—a self-identifying Catholic, raised in the baby-boomer generation who came of age during a time of liberal thought, and became a progressive thinker who did not accept every law of the Church. Kerry assured these Catholics that “there are literally millions of American Catholics who struggle with different feelings and different issues at different times, reaching out to inactive and modernist Catholics who are more likely to be pro-choice and pro-gay marriage.”³²⁴ Kerry was able to help the more modern

³²² Ibid., p.4-5.

³²³ Rossomando, p.38.

³²⁴ Tumulty.

Catholics rationalize their decision to vote for him by his appeal to the social justice side of Catholicism.

Kerry and the Issues

Kerry spoke on Catholic issues that appealed to the more progressive, social justice Catholics. Emphasizing his opposition to the death penalty, environmentally friendly policies, programs for the impoverished and higher minimum wages, Kerry worked to illustrate that many of his stances were in line with the Church.³²⁵ He used Catholic terms when speaking of his programs:

Catholics call this solidarity. We simply mean that as children of the same God, we share a common destiny. We express our humanity by reaching out to our fellow citizens, and indeed, to all our brothers and sisters in this country and on this earth....Those values will guide me as President....I will put middle class families and those struggling to join them ahead of the interests of the well-to-do and well-connected.³²⁶

Kerry was able to use his platform's focus on social justice to bring in the more liberal Catholics, who allow their faith to influence their vote, yet have a different value system than the traditional Catholic.

Re-affirming his Catholicism, albeit a liberal version, Kerry spoke of his status as a truly pro-life candidate because of his stance on capital punishment, health care and support for born children, and by linking Bush to the Abu Gahrib torture scandal, as well as his personal opposition to abortion.³²⁷ The Catholics for Kerry website described Kerry's platform as having a

pro-life thrust. He is against the death penalty except for terrorists. He is against torture. He supports programs that give dignity and support to children who are

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ "Kerry Addresses Faith, Values, but Rejects Bishops on Life Issues." *Catholic News Service*. 25 October 2004. <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0405879.htm>. 18 January 2005.

³²⁷ "Catholic Q & A."

born. He seeks to address the education of our children with full funding. He promises to restore America's leadership in the world, restore alliances and use war only as a last resort to protect the United States. Even in the one area that he is lacking, the anti-abortion area, we know that he is personally opposed to abortion and that his policies and platform provide avenues to address the abortion issue, so that we can eventually protect the unborn while preserving the civil rights and dignity of women.³²⁸

The campaign focused on the premise that truly respecting life also involved ending poverty and hunger, putting an end to capital punishment, and preventing war. The Kerry camp worked to assure Catholic voters that they should vote for Kerry due to his anti-war and aid to the poor positions, citing Vatican statements that "if Catholic voters find other compelling causes to favor an abortion-rights candidate, such a vote is permissible. An abortion-rights, anti-war voter would not necessarily be sinning, for example, when voting to oppose war."³²⁹ As stated by Pueblo, Colorado's bishop, Bishop Tafoya, "Respect for life is also confronted by hunger and poverty, the death penalty, euthanasia, war and, as we see today, torture."³³⁰ Kerry, as opposed to Bush, is a strong opponent of capital punishment, something on which Pope John Paul II has stated is only okay "in cases of absolute necessity, in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society. Today, however...such cases are rare, if not practically nonexistent."³³¹ On this issue, Catholics cannot disagree that Kerry stands more in line with their faith; however, the issue of capital punishment has not received the same degree of emphasis.

In order to play off his socially liberal position on abortion, Kerry explained the difference between passing a law that constituents desire, and the actual act of the woman

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Farrell.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹

Ibid.

choosing the abortion; claiming that “there is a degree of separation between the legislator and the individual sinful act.”³³² Thus, Kerry was merely voting on laws according to his constituents’ opinions, not his own, while also leaving each individual with the opportunity to choose against abortion. Kerry emphasized his own personal opposition to abortion, and that he worked to promote the culture of life through different channels than the GOP. The “Kerry Catholics” website stated that, “many believe the best way to address the abortion numbers is to remove the social conditions and situations that weigh on a woman’s decision making and provide a structure that supports women and children.”³³³ The more socially liberal Catholics stated they were merely taking a demand-side approach to ending abortion, looking to address the social issues that make it difficult for a woman to raise children.³³⁴

The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and the multiple swing states with similar measures on their ballots carried the issue of gay marriage to the forefront of the 2004 election. While Kerry was not actively in support of gay marriage, his position was that homosexuals should at least have the ability to create a civil union, as it would be “cruel and un-Christian to deny gay couples access to their children in the event of the other’s death, or refuse visitation rights, inheritance rights, and such rights afforded to civilly married couples.”³³⁵ He was also against the constitutional amendment to define marriage as strictly between a man and a woman, as this “amounts to gay bashing, undermines states rights, and politicizes the Constitution for the purpose of restricting

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ekeh, Ono. “More than one Pro-Life Way.” *National Catholic Reporter*. 23 April 2004. http://www.ncronline.org/NCR_online/archives2/2004b/042304/0423041.htm. 14 March 2005.

³³⁵ “Q & A 2.” *Kerry Catholics*. http://www.kerrycatholics.com/q&a_2.htm. 14 March 2005.

rights.”³³⁶ Kerry was careful to walk the line between his political and personal opinions, as he had to cater to both the Catholic voters and the gay community.³³⁷

The largest problem Catholics had with Kerry’s stance on gay marriage was their view that this was an issue of absolute morality, and he was not solidly against it.

Kerry’s initial vote against DOMA caused some to doubt his dedication to the issue.

Even his statement of personal opposition to homosexual marriage was not enough to satisfy some traditional Catholics.³³⁸ As political consultant Dick Morris stated,

Senator John Kerry will lose a lot of votes over the issue. But he will likely lose even more from his handling of it. As he tries to thread his way between his gay supporters and donors and the majority of the voters on this issues, he will come across looking very weak and very political. His layered position—opposing the amendment, backing civil unions, opposing gay marriage and voting against the Defense of Marriage Act that President Clinton signed—will seem disingenuous to voters on both sides of the issue.³³⁹

Kerry’s stance on abortion and gay marriage, while gaining the approval of inactive and more liberal Catholics, alienated the rank and file believers. While Kerry stood more in line with the Church’s economic policies, on the issues which impassioned more Catholics, Kerry was not following Church doctrine.

Religion and the Presidency

Due to the fact that Kerry’s stances on abortion and gay marriage differed from the Church’s position, Kerry had to address the relationship between his faith, personal beliefs and political actions.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Morris, Dick. “Why the Gay Marriage Issue Helps Bush.” *FrontPageMagazine.com* 3 March 2004. <http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/Printable.asp?ID-12445>. 10 March 2005.

³³⁹ Ibid.

Pressing the issue of separation of church and state, Kerry emphasized the fact that his job as a Senator was different from his personal life, and that in his professional life he had taken an oath to preserve the Constitution and Americans' freedoms.³⁴⁰ Kerry firmly believed that his job was to represent the people, not his own Church, and his religion could influence decisions as long as it never stood in the way of that duty. However, if he was to become "an agent of a religion...at the expense of the electorate, then that is crossing the line between church and state."³⁴¹ On October 24, 2004, Kerry stated that "My task, as I see it, is not to write every doctrine into law. That is not possible or right in a pluralistic society."³⁴² Using reciprocal logic, Kerry asserted that because the state does not instruct the Church, the Church should not instruct the state.³⁴³ The Democratic base and the Kerry campaign made clear that they did not want a president who would be dictated by his religions beliefs:

Isn't that what we want in a President, one who consults God to make decisions? No. The Presidency of the United States is about electing a man or woman with the leadership and competence to lead this nation and the world in the twenty-first century. As Christians we are not looking for a national prophet who can hear the voices of God and then dictate God's policy to us.³⁴⁴

This was clearly the opinion that won Kerry so many votes from the atheists, agnostics and inactive religious believers who wanted to keep faith separate from politics. This was also the opinion that turned off many traditional and active Catholics and Protestants.

Kerry's liberal stances on social issues caused a great deal of distress from traditional Catholics. The fact that he was Roman Catholic and expressed pro-choice

³⁴⁰ Segers, p.166.

³⁴¹ "Catholic Q & A."

³⁴² "Kerry Addresses Faith, Values, but Rejects Bishops on Life Issues."

³⁴³ Tumulty.

³⁴⁴ "Catholic Q & A."

views, rather than simply being pro-choice, hurt him more with some Catholics who were offended that he went against his faith.³⁴⁵ While Kerry didn't confront much anti-Catholic bias, he did encounter bias from those who didn't believe he was Catholic enough.³⁴⁶ Not only was Kerry publicly standing for positions traditional Catholics did not agree with, but he claimed to be a Catholic at the same time. Therefore, many saw him as not only opposing Church teachings, but attacking the authority of the Catholic Church by publicly disagreeing.³⁴⁷ As Fr. Frank Pavone of Priests for Life stated, "He gives a bad name to the Catholic religion by creating the impression that one can be a Catholic and just throw key teachings out the window."³⁴⁸ Another conservative, Alphonse Matt, editor and publisher of the Catholic newspaper, *The Wanderer*, stated that

I have never been so distressed at a politician who claims to be Catholic, using his religion in such a phony, dishonest and confusing way. He obviously believes things and practices things completely opposite to the teachings of the Catholic faith. He said 'I am a Catholic; I used to be an altar boy.' Well, he may have been baptized, but he's about as Catholic as the man in the moon.³⁴⁹

Although their religion had helped Catholic candidates in the past gain votes with fellow Catholics, neither Kennedy nor Smith went against such an emphasized doctrine of the Church. Kerry would not lose the votes of the non-Catholics for his private beliefs, but he lost many Catholic votes because they were "turned off by their 'fellow Catholic' public flaunting of their Church's teachings on abortion."³⁵⁰ Many saw the possibility of

³⁴⁵ Tokaz, Jay. "A Faith Divided at the Polls; Kerry can't Count on Vote from Traditional Catholics."

³⁴⁶ Gordon.

³⁴⁷ Holloway.

³⁴⁸ Ertelt, Steven. "Leading Catholics say Most Priests will Back President bush over John Kerry."

³⁴⁹ Haga.

³⁵⁰ Holloway.

Kerry's election as "a disaster for the Church" as he publicly went against Catholic teaching and proclaimed that his faith would not guide his decisions.³⁵¹

While in the past, Catholics might have voted for a candidate because he shared their faith, one cannot rely on this behavior any longer. Only 14 percent of Catholics claim to have a specific preference for a Roman Catholic candidate, all things being equal. For active Catholics, this number only increases to 21 percent.³⁵² As Phil Singer, a spokesman for Kerry-Edwards, said, "Americans were less concerned with a candidate's religion than with his policies."³⁵³ While polls do show that Americans prefer candidates of religious backgrounds, there is nothing to show that voters today prefer politicians of their same faith—what matters are the values they uphold. Bush had a strong advantage in this regard, as he was the most openly spiritually devoted president in recent times.³⁵⁴ To active Catholic, the candidate's opinions on issues such as abortion and stem cell research were more important than his religious denomination.³⁵⁵

Bush however, had the backing of many traditional Catholics because of his adherence to social conservative positions—being pro-life, anti-gay marriage, anti-cloning and stem cell research—and he stressed the importance of reversing the moral decline in society. These issues, along with his public statements regarding his faith, brought him into favor with many rank and file Catholics, despite his Protestant faith.

³⁵¹ Hudson, Deal. "The Price of Politics." *National Review*. 18 August 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

³⁵² Wagner, Steven. "Social Renewal Catholics." p.29.

³⁵³ Zeleny.

³⁵⁴ Tumulty.

³⁵⁵ Zeleny.

Bush's Catholic Campaign Structure

With the 2004 election shaping up to be close, Christian outreach had to be a major target for Bush, probably more than any other group, as the social Christian conservatives comprised the majority of his base. While the Republicans couldn't win with just the Christians, they would definitely lose without their votes.³⁵⁶ Looking at the Christian vote by denomination, the Catholics were important as they make up the largest single denomination—about 31 percent of the party.³⁵⁷ Deal Hudson, Bush's Catholic Coordinator in 2000, stated that "if we lose any of the Catholic vote, we lost the election."³⁵⁸ With such a close election, an important group like the Catholics was not about to be ignored, but would be the project of political genius, Karl Rove.

Many believe that Rove first began planning the Catholic coalition plans as early as 1998 after reading an article by Steven Wagner in *Crisis* magazine. Wagner's ideas primarily centered on the Catholics today shifting from an economic focus and onto social renewal.³⁵⁹ Ralph Reed, another important political mind in the Bush campaign, sought to create the type of coalition in the Catholic community that he had created in the Christian community.³⁶⁰

In order to engage and mobilize the Catholic vote, the Bush campaign set up a complex grassroots network. The campaign mobilized 55,000 Catholic volunteers, hired 30 full time Catholic field staff, distributed 76 million voters guides in key states, ran

³⁵⁶ McGurn, William. "The Way Ahead." *Crisis*. April 2000. p.43.

³⁵⁷ Hudson, Deal. "Catholics and the GOP." p.6.

³⁵⁸ Waldman, Steven and John Green. "It Wasn't Just (or Even Mostly) the 'Religious Right'." *Beliefnet*. http://www.beliefnet.com/story/155/story_15598_1.html. 18 January 2005.

³⁵⁹ Stricherz.

³⁶⁰ Wagner, Steven. "The Catholic Political Identity." p.25.

Catholic-centered ads in Ohio and Pennsylvania, set up a Catholics for Bush website, as well as KerryWrongforCatholics.com.^{361,362} Bush supporters in parishes around the country were identified in order to enlist their help, with some states looking for volunteers in as many as 1,600 parishes.³⁶³ Even before the Bush campaign even swung into motion, the RNC had identified Catholics in target states as part of its Catholic Task Force, sending them emails and mailings on issues of interest to Catholic voters.³⁶⁴ This was the first time the RNC has recruited Catholics outside an election, and thus set a new precedent for the GOP's proactive position with Catholic voters.³⁶⁵ The Republicans had stepped up their level of focus on the Catholic voter, and "their grassroots operation this time was something on a whole new level for them, really beating the Democrats at the ground-game."³⁶⁶ The Republicans had a much larger force and strategy targeted at the Catholic voter than the Democrats, mostly because the GOP was focused on winning active Catholic voters, while Kerry had his eye on more modern, liberal Catholics, who blended in more easily with the average voter.

Because the traditional and active Catholics are more likely to attend Mass, Bush had a much easier piece of the Catholic demographic to reach.³⁶⁷ Deal Hudson, Catholic outreach director in 2000, stated the campaign's goal:

target Mass-attending Catholic voters, not the larger group of self-identified Catholics, because Mass attendance is the best indication of a commitment to the

³⁶¹ O'Beirne.

³⁶² Reilly.

³⁶³ Feldman.

³⁶⁴ Wagner, Steven. "Will America Bury the Hatchet?" p.11.

³⁶⁵ Rossomando, p.36.

³⁶⁶ Schmalz.

³⁶⁷ Feldman.

kind of values taught by the Church and represented by then candidate Governor George W. Bush.³⁶⁸

While the Bush campaign targeted this group, they let the Church hierarchy do most of the talking and convincing. One way that Mass-going Catholics were targeted was through parish voter registration drives, again done by the individuals at their own churches, yet all of these voters, because they were attending Mass, were more likely to vote for the conservative ticket.

Another tactic to reach active Catholics was through the distribution of the *Voter's Guide for Serious Catholics*, a publication that many “attributed with swaying and energizing pro-life Catholics to come out in greater numbers.”³⁶⁹ This guide was quite conservative, listing the five “non-negotiable” issues: gay marriage, euthanasia, human cloning, abortion and fetal stem cell research, telling voters:

it is a serious sin to deliberately endorse or promote any of these actions, and no candidate who really wants to advance the common good will support any action contrary to the non-negotiable issues....No one endorsing the wrong side of these issues can be said to act in accord with the Church's moral norms.^{370,371}

The guide did not claim to be partisan literature, but rather stated its purpose as helping the voter to “cast your vote in an informed manner consistent with Catholic moral teaching. It helps you to avoid choosing candidates who endorse policies that cannot be reconciled with moral norms that used to be held by all Christians.”³⁷² There was no mention of war or the death penalty in the guide; instead it focused on the five mentioned issues, indirectly pointing the reader towards the Republicans. It states that there is rarely

³⁶⁸ Hudson, Deal. “The Price of Politics.” *National Review*. 18 August 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

³⁶⁹ Schmalz.

³⁷⁰ Gordon.

³⁷¹ *Voter's Guide for Serious Catholics*. El Cajon, CA: Catholic Answers, 2004.

³⁷² *Ibid.*

a perfect candidate, but that one should vote for the individual who takes the fewest positions in opposition to the five main issues or the one who “seems least likely to advance immoral legislation.”³⁷³ Further pointing the reader towards Bush and the GOP, it instructs Catholics to “not vote based on your political party affiliation, your earlier voting habits, or your family’s voting tradition. Years ago, these may have been trustworthy ways to determine whom to vote for, but today they are often not reliable.”³⁷⁴ Clearly this passage from the guide is in reference to the Catholic alliance with the Democratic Party, and is asking voters to consider other political parties. Pulling Kerry’s legitimacy away from him, the reader is told “do not vote for candidates simply because they declare themselves to be Catholic. Unfortunately, many self-described Catholic candidates reject basic Catholic moral teaching.”³⁷⁵ Although this voter’s guide never states any names or gives explicit voting instruction, it was to the Republicans’ advantage that this was handed out at Mass, reinforcing the words of many parish priests by placing these words in the hands of the voter.

Bush and his Faith

Another area in which the Bush-Cheney campaign was able to capitalize was Bush’s strong connection to his religion. Although not Catholic, Bush was an openly devout Protestant and deeply committed to his faith. There was no longer a harsh divide between Catholics and Protestants, and unity was discovered between their similar feelings on many cultural issues, especially abortion. The bond formed not between all Protestants and Catholics, but rather, between the more traditional members; “an

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

orthodox feels more in common with another orthodox of another denomination than an unorthodox of his own denomination.”³⁷⁶ While Kerry swore to not let his faith guide his political decisions, Bush told voters that “he prays often ‘to receive calmness in the storms of the presidency.’”³⁷⁷ Clearly, his many positions on issues such as abortion and gay marriage stem from his religious background as a born-again Christian. Bush further utilized this religious pull by selecting an anti-abortion running mate and creating an “unambiguously pro-life ticket.”³⁷⁸ Together, the two created a ticket that had no shame in admitting its Christian grounding, something that many traditional Catholics greatly admired.

In order to show the Catholics that he cared and understood their religious background, Bush went out of his way to meet with Catholic leaders to help win the Catholic vote. It was only a few days after his inauguration in 2000, Bush had dinner with D.C. Archbishop McCarrick, beginning his string of public appearances with Catholic leaders.³⁷⁹ Not long after, Bush met with over 40 Catholic leaders of social security providers, emphasizing both his religious side and his conservative economic policies. Also in early 2001, Bush had a meeting with several bishops and cardinals in the Oval Office to praise Catholic education, as well as a meeting with the leaders of various Catholic charities.^{380,381} He continued to make himself visible in the Catholic community by delivering Notre Dame’s commencement speech and participating in an

³⁷⁶ Bottum.

³⁷⁷ Gordon.

³⁷⁸ Wagner, Steven. “Will America Bury the Hatchet?” p.14.

³⁷⁹ Hudson, Deal. “Bush Courts the Catholics.” *Crisis*. May 2001. p.8.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.334.

Irish-American St. Patrick's Day celebration.³⁸² Bush also played a visible role in D.C.'s Pope John Paul II Cultural Center, meeting with the seven cardinals and 25 bishops who were responsible for the center. He attended the grand opening, delivering a "genuine tribute to the Pope," staying away from policy other than to reaffirm his solidarity with American Catholics.³⁸³ Bush also met with Church leaders outside the U.S., paying visits to Pope John Paul II three times during his first term, even presenting the Holy See with the Presidential Medal of Freedom during one of the visits. When speaking to Catholic audiences about his visits with the Holy Father, Bush focused on the awe of the moment, stating that "being in his presence is an awesome experience," further moving into the good graces of those Catholics who honor and revere their pope.³⁸⁴ Pictures and stories from the President's visit to Vatican City served "to reinforce people's existing point of view" of Bush as a religiously devoted man.^{385,386} Thus, despite his Protestant religion, Bush managed to be a visible presence in the American Catholic scene.

Many of Bush's Catholic appearances maintained a strictly non-policy basis in order to serve the main purpose of creating the image in voters' minds of Bush's connection to the Catholics. However, closer to election time, Bush began to speak to Catholics about policy and to convince them why he was their candidate. One of his largest and most prominent Catholic-focused events was a 35 minute speech he gave at the August 3, 2004, 122nd Annual Convention of the Knights of Columbus to 2,500 lay

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Hudson, Deal. "Bush Courts the Catholics."

³⁸⁴ "Bush Outlines Appeal to Catholic Voters."

³⁸⁵ Thomma.

³⁸⁶ Feldman.

Catholics, bishops and cardinals.^{387,388} Bush told those gathered that “you have a friend in this administration,” while focusing on issues such as faith-based initiatives, abortion, cloning, same-sex marriage and helping the poor.^{389,390} The goal of the event was to remind Catholic voters that, despite his Protestant faith, he would stand by the morals and values of the Catholic Church.

Bush’s Appeal to Active and Traditional Catholics

The strong Republican push for socially conservative Catholic voters began with Reagan in the 1980s, and Bush continued the trend into the 2000 election, focusing on practicing Catholics and Hispanic Catholics, though his theme of “compassionate conservatism.”³⁹¹ The campaign worked to some degree, as Bush won ten percent more Catholics in 2000 than Bob Dole in 1996.³⁹² However, as Bush did not get enough of the targeted coalition—only 62 percent of those who believed the country was morally on the wrong track voted for Bush, while Al Gore was able to bring in 70 percent of those who believed the country was on the correct path. Bush knew he needed more of this social renewal group, as the percentage he did win made up 74 percent of his total vote, while Gore’s was only 57 percent of his total vote.³⁹³ Had Bush been able to play the morality card better in 2000, he would have gained a substantial amount of voters, as the majority of Bush’s votes came from those who believed the country needed a social

³⁸⁷ “Bush Outlines Appeal to Catholic Voters.”

³⁸⁸ Zeleny.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ “Bush Outlines Appeal to Catholic Voters.”

³⁹¹ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.326.

³⁹² Hudson, Deal. “The Price of Politics.”

³⁹³ Wagner, Steven. “Will American Bury the Hatchet?” p.13.

renewal. Bush recognized that if he was to win in 2004, outreach to morally conscious groups would be necessary; thus, the Catholics landed on the 2004 target list.³⁹⁴

Bush's Catholic outreach campaign focused on the traditional and active Catholics—a group that tends to be conservative and more likely to listen to the Church hierarchy on topics such as abortion, stem cell research and gay marriage. Active members of any religion are more likely to let their religious beliefs affect their vote, and as Bush was the more openly devout candidate, he brought in many of the active Catholics. As some stated, “the Republican Party has become the party of choice for people of faith,” especially after Bush won 59 percent of the religiously active vote in 2000.^{395,396} No candidate has ever brought in a larger percentage of this demographic except the landslide elections of Nixon in 1972 and Reagan in 1984.³⁹⁷ In 2004, according to Pew Research, Bush received over two-thirds of his total vote from four religious groups—traditional Evangelicals (88%), other Christians (80%), traditional Catholics (72%) and traditional mainline Protestants (68%)—with each of the four groups having over three-fifths turnout.³⁹⁸ Not only did Bush receive 72 percent of traditional Catholics' votes, but 53 percent of the centrist Catholics.³⁹⁹ Focusing on the likeminded groups within the Catholic religion was to Bush's benefit, as older, more traditional Catholics tend to be located in the battleground states and are more likely to

³⁹⁴ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.333.

³⁹⁵ Wagner, Steven. “Will America Bury the Hatchet.” p.15.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.14.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.14.

³⁹⁸ Green, p.4.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.4.

vote “based on cultural reasons not economic reasons.”⁴⁰⁰ Even those voters that were traditionally Democrats have swung to the Republican Party because of cultural issues.⁴⁰¹

Bush’s Hispanic Outreach

Not only did the Catholic campaign outreach to traditional Democrat working class voters by emphasizing cultural issues, but the same was done for the Catholic Hispanic community as well. Bush reached out the Hispanic community, not only with his campaign slogans of “Viva Bush!,” but through his platform of ‘compassionate conservatism.’ He told the Hispanics that the poor are better served through the community rather than the government, similar to the Catholic theory of subsidiarity, and this would be made possible through his programs. Also, he emphasized his conservative stances on abortion and gay marriage.⁴⁰²

Bush and the Issues

The focus of Bush’s campaign was on moral and cultural issues, which was beneficial to winning the Catholic vote. Many of the policies and programs of his first term appealed to the Catholic voter—his reversal of some of Clinton’s pro-choice executive orders, the partial-birth abortion ban, faith based initiatives, voucher programs with Catholic schools, working to limit stem-cell research, the Born Alive Infants Protection Act, the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, tripling the amount of money to chastity-based school programs, working on a cloning ban and supporting the constitutional amendment to protect marriage.^{403,404} Bush focused on the difference in

⁴⁰⁰ Tokaz, Jay. “A Faith Divided at the Polls.”

⁴⁰¹ O’Beirne.

⁴⁰² Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.326.

⁴⁰³ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.334.

the Democrats and Republicans stating that his party alone sought to promote life and protect marriage.⁴⁰⁵ Some attention was also placed on economic issues, like education, taxes, social security and healthcare. In these areas, it was not so much explaining policy, but attempting to change the way voters think about the best means to deal with problems.⁴⁰⁶ For example, Bush spoke of his desire to end poverty through the use of his faith based initiative program, which would take into consideration the moral and spiritual aspects of poverty and respond to a deeper human desire, as well as the Catholic idea of subsidiarity—that community organizations are better at serving the people than the government bureaucracy.⁴⁰⁷ However, even these economic issues remained focused around the idea of morality and the role of religion in society.

The issue of moral decline was an important one for the Bush campaign to utilize in its outreach to Catholics, as 75 percent of all Catholics and 79 percent of active Catholics believe there is a “crisis of declining individual morality affecting the nation today.”⁴⁰⁸ It is from this issue that Bush would gain most of his votes:

The issues of perceived moral decline, despite general satisfaction with life in America, is a crucial one for conservative Republican strategists. It is the foundation of our social divide, the engine of the incremental realignment of the voters according to their religious activism, and the coming dominant issue in American Politics.⁴⁰⁹

It is under this umbrella of moral decline that the Republican Party can find a strong constituency. The Republicans have a better opening into this constituency, as around 60 percent of Catholics believe the federal government is only increasing the moral decline,

⁴⁰⁴ “Bush Outlines Appeal to Catholic Voters.”

⁴⁰⁵ Zeleny.

⁴⁰⁶ Rossomando, p.40.

⁴⁰⁷ Santorum, Rick. “Subsidiarity at Work: A Catholic’s Visit of Social Policy.” *Crisis*. June 1999. p.34.

⁴⁰⁸ Wagner, Steven. “Social Renewal Catholics.” p.25.

⁴⁰⁹ Wagner, Steven. “Will America Bury the Hatchet?” p.13.

clearly a conservative opinion that speaks for less government influence in our life.⁴¹⁰

Also 66 percent of all Catholics and 73 percent of active Catholics believe popular culture is “seriously undermining the character and values of our young people.”⁴¹¹

Again, it is the GOP that is pushing for less indecency in the media and reigning in the rampant sexuality of popular culture. Sixty-seven percent of Catholics that believe there is a societal moral decline believe the solution “lies more in courage than in tolerance.”⁴¹²

Yet another conservative point of view, as the GOP looks to address moral decline by standing up to breaches in societal morality, while the left tends to take the path of embracing our differences rather than striking them from society. The Bush campaign capitalized on the Catholic perception of moral decline, working to demonstrate that Bush would help put an end to it. Twenty-two percent of voters chose moral values as the number one issues in the 2004 election, and 80 percent of these voters cast their ballots for the Bush-Cheney ticket.⁴¹³ Positions such as Bush’s stance on abortion and gay marriage helped reinforce his position against moral decline in society.

The pro-life issue truly made a difference in Bush’s ability to bring in the Catholic vote. Exit polling illustrated that most Americans are pro-life and 42 percent of voters said abortion affected which way they voted, with a two-to-one margin of these voters casting a pro-life ballot.⁴¹⁴ Bush received a twelve percent advantage from the pro-life voters, a margin necessary for victory.⁴¹⁵ Had Bush, for example, chosen a pro-choice

⁴¹⁰ Wagner, Steven. “Social Renewal Catholics.” p.25.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p.25.

⁴¹² McGurn, William. “Style Counts.” p.20.

⁴¹³ Zapor, Patricia. “End of the Catholic Vote?”

⁴¹⁴ Ertelt, Steven. “Poll Shows Abortion Voters Gave President Bush Twelve Percent Advantage.”

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

vice president, he would have likely lost around 29 percent of the overall vote and 34 percent of the active Catholic vote.⁴¹⁶ It is the abortion issue, and cultural and moral issues like it, that truly mobilized Bush's base.

The issue of gay marriage found its opposition not only in traditional conservatives but also in the typical Democrat white working class. Many of these economically liberal and socially conservative voters made up an important part of the electorate in 2004, not only because they were on the ideological fence, but because so many of them live in battleground states.⁴¹⁷ Bush appealed to voters who perceived it necessary to reverse the country's moral decline and tied the gay marriage issue directly in—

because families pass along values and shape character, traditional marriage is also critical to the health of society. Our policies should aim to strengthen families, not undermine them. And changing the definition of traditional marriage will undermine the family structure.⁴¹⁸

Not only did the gay marriage issue bring out traditional Democrats in support of Bush, but it also increased voter turnout among those already in Bush's camp. The Defense of Marriage Act to amend state constitutions appeared on 11 states' ballots, firing up voters in these states and giving them another reason to make it to the polls on November 2. Voters could be mobilized to get out and vote for DOMA, and to also cast their ballot for Bush. All but two of the states with DOMA on the ballot went for Bush. The two

⁴¹⁶ Wagner, Steven. "Will America Bury the Hatchet?"

⁴¹⁷ Marlin, George J. *The American Catholic Voter*. p.337.

⁴¹⁸ O'Brien, Nancy Frazier. "Support for Marriage seen as Crucial to Bush's Win of Second Term." *Catholic News Service*. 5 November 2004. <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0406120.htm>. 17 January 2005.

exceptions, Oregon and Michigan, also happened to be the only two of the 11 where voters did not select moral values as the most important issue in the 2004 election.⁴¹⁹

Tension between Catholics and the GOP

Despite the Bush campaign's ability to bring non-traditional Republicans into the fold and to continue the trend of encouraging Catholics to vote Republican, there remains a great deal of unease between Catholics and the GOP. Catholics continue to be uncomfortable with the "anti-Catholic New England establishment" and the demonized Christian right-wing that Catholics continue to distrust.⁴²⁰ The GOP's anti-government rhetoric is perceived as harsh and uncompassionate, leaving some uncertainty about the truth in compassionate conservatism.⁴²¹ Democrats have been better at exploiting class divisions and making the Republicans into the party of the rich and the Democrats into the party of the people.⁴²² Despite the passage of time, the Catholic-Democrat connection has yet to be erased, just as distrust of the Republican Party remains.⁴²³ The Republican Party is viewed as the party of the rich in many Catholics' eyes, and there is concern that the GOP is too focused on materialism and economics.⁴²⁴ However, although Catholics are hesitant to vote down the ticket Republican, as they used to do with the Democrats, the move towards greater emphasis on moral and cultural issues has caused Catholic voters to vote more on the issues and less on party lines.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ McGurn, Steven. "Style Counts." p.20.

⁴²¹ Hudson, Deal. "Catholics and the GOP." p.6.

⁴²² Rossomando, p.38.

⁴²³ McGurn, Steven. "Style Counts." p.19-20.

⁴²⁴ Rossomando, p.37-38, 40.

Conclusion

Bush and Kerry both fought for the Catholic vote, a demographic seen as crucial to securing victory. Bush tended to target active, traditional Catholics, while Kerry geared his campaign to the more modern, inactive Catholics. However, both candidates had to face the same issues: abortion, gay marriage, war, the death penalty, stem cell research and many others. Bush had the advantage on the Catholic issues, despite Kerry's Catholicism, as the emphasis of the Church in 2004 was on abortion and gay marriage, rather than economic or foreign policy issues. Also, with abortion, the Church takes a doctrinal stance, while the others are really prudential matters. Thus, on an issue so focused on by the Church, Bush could target his campaign to the traditional Catholic voter—an easier group to reach and more distinguishable than inactive Catholics. Furthermore, the fact that issues of morality, rather than the war or the economy, were ranked the most important to voters benefited Bush. Clearly, times have changed since the last Catholic presidential candidate.

Outside Political and Religious Involvement

Not only did the Kerry and Bush campaigns get involved with political outreach to Catholics, but so did many outside political groups that were created for the primary purpose of Catholic outreach. After the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform, the nation saw the rise of many large 527s and Political Action Committees (PACs), such as MoveOn.org and America Coming Together (ACT). Catholic organizations were not an exception to the rule and created many PACs and 527s of their own.

Catholics for Political Responsibility and Catholics for a Free Choice were two of the more left-leaning groups. Catholics for Political Responsibility had two different radio ads, airing primarily in Ohio, which opposed President Bush for his involvement in the war.⁴²⁵

Little Sisters of the Poor was less partisan, but still was a significant group, operating on about a ten million dollar budget.⁴²⁶ Pax Christi ran ads targeting Catholics that reminded Catholics that abortion was one of many issues that should be considered.⁴²⁷

Others leaned strongly to the right, such as Catholic Answers. This group's message was that Catholics must vote for the candidate who supports the Church in the "five non-negotiable issues' of this election: abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem-cell research, human cloning, and gay marriage."⁴²⁸ Catholic Answers was responsible for

⁴²⁵ Ertelt, Steven. "Leading Catholic Says Most Priests will Back President Bush." p.1.

⁴²⁶ Stricherz.

⁴²⁷ Ertelt, Steven. "Leading Catholic Says Most Priests will Back President Bush." p.1.

⁴²⁸ Campbell, Colleen Carroll. "Living on a Prayer." *National Review*. 22 October 2004. Lexis Nexis Online. 7 March 2005.

printing millions of copies of the booklet, “Voters Guide for Serious Catholics.” which instructed Catholics to vote along with Church teachings.⁴²⁹

Other groups, while not Democrat or Republican, focused strictly on the pro-life issues. Priests for Life had a very grassroots system, sending priests and other pro-life activists around the country for “Citizenship Sundays” where they would register voters after Mass at hundreds of Catholic churches for seven different weekends. Priests who cooperated were asked to remind their parishioners to vote and to make voting pro-life a priority. This group also put out TV and print ads along with their voter registration focus.⁴³⁰ However, this organization was not strictly Republican, as the executive director of Democrats for Life, Kristen Day, believed that Priests for Life was having a positive effect, “I am sure they had a huge impact on this election and getting people out....It’s been a good year for Pro-life Democrats.”⁴³¹ Former mayor Ray Flynn also created another non-partisan pro-life group, Your Catholic Voice. It featured an extensive voter database, 25 paid staff, 200,000 members, and a five million dollar budget.⁴³² Flynn was a Democrat for many years and opposes the death penalty, the Iraq war, and is firmly for social justice, yet more than the other issues he is firmly pro-life.⁴³³ Many of the more liberal Catholic organizations see these pro-life groups, such as Priests for Life, as direct campaigns for Bush—“there is a concern that our (Catholic) tradition of social teaching includes a wide spectrum of issues, but from some church leaders it was very clear how pointed their direction was and how focused their attention was on a

⁴²⁹ Haga.

⁴³⁰ Stricherz.

⁴³¹ Schmalz.

⁴³² Stricherz.

⁴³³ O’Beirne.

few issues to the neglect of others and that was influential,” stated Sister Anne Curtis of NETWORK, a social justice lobbying group.⁴³⁴

While many of these groups were not necessarily campaigning for one candidate, their work helped make issues more visible to Catholics and increased the Catholic vote. These outside groups played an important role in the election, and their small size should not automatically discount them from being an integral part of the political process.

⁴³⁴ Tokasz.

Analysis

The 2004 election is part of a change in American politics—it illustrates the culture war that is battling out in America’s cities and neighborhoods. Voters were given a choice between two candidates who each represented a different direction the United States could pursue. American citizens were weighed down by terrorism threats, an ailing economy and a general loss of American innocence, searching for a candidate who would put the country on the right path.

American voters split widely down a margin of cultural separation, as did the Catholics. The religious church-goers tended to vote for Bush, while the more secular community supported Kerry. There are Catholics today who fit into both categories. However, those who self-identify as Catholic, yet rarely vote or take action as a result of their faith can hardly be classified as a Catholic voter. The active Catholics, who tend to vote on issues emphasized by the Church, can truly be classified as a Catholic vote, as faith plays a more influential role in their life. Many speculate if a Catholic vote really does exist when there is such a large divide within Catholicism. While there might not be one solid Catholic vote, those that actively allow their faith to shape their lives tend to vote by similar patterns; thus, one could fairly name the actives as the Catholic vote.

In 2004, Bush’s stance on moral decline, and his promise to reverse it, won the hearts of many active Catholics concerned about the issue.⁴³⁵ Americans made a strong statement by declaring moral values as the number one issue in the 2004 election. Bush was helped by this desire for moral renewal, as 80 percent of these people cast a

⁴³⁵ Wagner, Steven. “The Catholic Political Identity.” p.28.

Republican ballot.⁴³⁶ Changing his course from 2000, Bush focused more on morals and values in the 2004 election, bringing in 16.1 million Catholic votes, increasing his number by 3.3 million in four years.⁴³⁷ George Marlin, who has studied in-depth the Catholic vote, stated that “churchgoing people saved the election for Bush as practicing Catholics and evangelicals moved much more strongly for him.”⁴³⁸ Bush’s stance on what Catholics and evangelicals perceived as moral issues was one of the key factors in determining the election.

Clearly, with such a close election, the Catholic vote played an important role in providing a significant proportion of votes. Bush was able to take the religiously active Catholics 55 percent to Kerry’s 42 percent. For the first time, more active Catholics voted Republican than the national average.⁴³⁹ Bush’s gains were among the traditionalist and centrist Catholics, the centrist Catholics being a key swing group of Catholic voters.⁴⁴⁰ As Father Richard Neuhaus, editor of *First Things*, stated, “this time, the Catholic vote broke strongly for President Bush, and I think that is something of considerable importance in terms of the realignment of Catholic voters in this country.”⁴⁴¹ These numbers were not so different from Reagan’s performance in 1984—another election highly affected by social issues. Statistics show that Republicans who are strong social conservatives, not more social moderates like George H.W. Bush, have been able to win over Catholic voters.⁴⁴² If the socially moderate Republicans cannot

⁴³⁶ Zapor, Patricia. “Bishops Receive Report from Task Force on Bishops, Politicians.”

⁴³⁷ Remsen.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Wagner, Steven. “Will America Bury the Hatchet?” p.14.

⁴⁴⁰ Green, p.10.

⁴⁴¹ Schmalz.

⁴⁴² McGurn, William. “Style Counts.” p.19.

win the Catholic vote, then clearly the Catholics are not casting their vote on economic issues, but rather, social issues. Much of Bush's victory can be attributed to the fact that he was able to emphasize his socially conservative positions as attempts to reverse moral decline.

Furthermore, the issue of abortion, allowed the pro-life movement, which is strongly connected to the Catholic Church, to mobilize active Catholic voters. With the combination of vocal pro-life American bishops, an abundance of pro-life Catholic voter's guides and pro-life parish voter registration drives, Kerry, with his pro-choice stance, could not combat the strength of this movement.⁴⁴³ Fritz Wenzel, a political analyst with Zogby Polls stated that

Increased attention on Kerry's pro-abortion policies combined with strong pro-life networks in those swing states was making the difference for Bush. The numbers show concern about the legitimacy of the war in Iraq being overridden by ongoing discomfort with Kerry's stand on abortion.⁴⁴⁴ Bush was greatly helped by the pro-life movement. He would not have experienced the success and mobilization of pro-life voters if it were not for the efforts at the parish level and strong pro-life statements coming from bishops and the Vatican. Furthermore, the Defense of Marriage issues played a key role in mobilizing Bush supporters. The appearance of this measure on 11 states' ballots encouraged many traditional conservative Catholics to come to the polls. Issues such as gay marriage and abortion not only boosted Bush's popularity with Catholics, but they also increased voter turnout by creating incentive to cast a ballot.

⁴⁴³ Campbell.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

Between the Catholic outreach campaigns and the high visibility of key issues, Catholics had extremely high voter turnout. Bush won a majority of non-Latino Catholics, 53 percent, who had a turnout of 67 percent. Traditionalist Catholics had the best turnout of all the Catholic groups at 77 percent, and voted 72 percent for Bush. Centrist Catholics had a 58 percent turnout, voting 55 percent for Bush. Modernist Catholics had a 70 percent turnout, voting 69 percent for Kerry, and Latino Catholics with a 43 percent turnout voted 69 percent for Kerry as well.⁴⁴⁵ Turnout for Catholics greatly improved, and usually in Bush's favor. Traditionalist Catholics increased their turnout by 12 points, giving 17 more points to Bush in 2004. Latino Catholics increased turnout by 17 points, and actually giving seven more points to Bush, according to Pew Research.⁴⁴⁶ These high numbers are most likely attributed to highly publicized issues such as abortion and gay marriage that drove impassioned voters to the polls.

Despite losing the majority of Latino Catholic votes, Bush still improved his numbers among this demographic, mostly because of his appeal to their socially conservative side. A similar trend was Bush's improvement among the African-American Protestant community as well. Bush was able to win 42 percent of the Latino Catholic vote, an improvement from his 31 percent in 2000 according to polls collected by *Beliefnet*, and an increase of seven percent according to Pew Research.^{447,448} The Latino Catholic and African-American Protestant vote also made up eight percent of Bush's total vote, up from three percent in 2000. Kerry's share dropped however, with

⁴⁴⁵ Green, p.3-4.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., p.8.

⁴⁴⁷ Waldman, p.1.

⁴⁴⁸ Green, p.8.

only 19 percent of this demographic adding to his total numbers, as compared to Gore's 22 percent.⁴⁴⁹ As minorities begin to settle in the U.S., it seems that their voting patterns shift, following the trends of European Catholic immigrants in the 20th century.

Bush was able to bring in more of the typical Democratic voters, such as the Latino Catholics, because of his emphasis on morals. This focus appealed to the traditional Catholic voters who allowed faith to play a large role in their political decisions. Twenty one percent of Bush's votes came from individuals who claimed that their faith was "more important than other factors," and 26 percent of his voters stated that their faith was "about as important as other factors." Only two of the religious groups that gave Bush a majority of their votes did not have a majority select one of these two options—the centrist Catholics and the centrist mainline Protestants.⁴⁵⁰ Seventy-five percent of traditional Catholics stated that their faith was about as or more important than other factors, 38 percent of centrist Catholics agreed, as did 65 percent of Latino Catholics and only 21 percent of modernist Catholics.⁴⁵¹ Overall, Bush's coalition votes with their faith in mind much more than Kerry's voters. Thus, the Bush voters were more likely to vote for a candidate because of his positions on major Church issues, thus explaining Bush capturing the active Catholic vote.

While Bush's coalition came mainly from traditional religious groups and active members of their faith, Kerry found his base in a much more diverse constituency, consisting of minority groups, unaffiliated religions, agnostics and modernist Christians. These groups are by no means as homogenous as Bush's coalition, thus making it more

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., p.9.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid. p.13.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid, p.14.

difficult for Kerry to reach out to them with one overreaching topic, like Bush's desire for moral renewal.⁴⁵² Although Kerry was able to make gains among modernist Catholics, he could not halt Bush's momentum with the overall Catholic vote.

One of the reasons that Bush's win of the Catholic vote was so critical in the final outcome of the election was the strong presence of Catholics in the battleground states. Catholicism was the dominant religion in two-thirds of the key states in the 2004 election.⁴⁵³ For example, in Ohio, a key swing state, Bush received just under half of the Catholic vote in 2000, but 172,000 votes shifted when Bush won 55 percent of the Catholics in 2004. Because Bush won Ohio by only 136,000 and many of these other swing states by very small percentages, his increased emphasis on morality in 2004 clearly brought a significant and necessary portion over to his column.⁴⁵⁴ In Florida, Bush gained 400,000 Catholic votes—the same margin as his overall victory—by increasing his percentage of the state's Catholic vote by three percent.⁴⁵⁵

The Catholic vote was clearly an integral part of the 2004 election, as it was a demographic that was highly sensitive to moral issues, a key factor in the race. A majority of Americans ranked moral issues as the most important factor in the 2004 election, and Catholics made up a significant portion of this coalition, assisting in the final outcome. Traditional and active Catholics, historically rank and file Democrats, were drawn to the Republican Party because of cultural issues. The Catholic Church, although siding with the Democratic Party on most economic and foreign policy issues, is

⁴⁵² Ibid, p.6.

⁴⁵³ O'Beirne.

⁴⁵⁴ Waldman, p.1.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

so overwhelmingly pro-life and emphasized this to such an extent in 2004, that all other issues were nearly forgotten. Thus, traditional Catholics cast a solid vote for moral renewal and the Republican Party.

However, if the Democrats are to win back any of the Catholic vote they must swing the focus of elections back to economics and away from right to life issues. Democrats must also look for other religious groups to rely on, for until the Party's stance on abortion changes, the alliance with the Catholics will not hold up. Furthermore, the Democrats will not be able to run a Catholic candidate in their pro-choice party until the abortion issue fades.⁴⁵⁶

The GOP however, is not on safe ground, for Catholics still harbor some concerns about the Republican Party. To secure a more solid constituency, the Republicans must win Catholics over on economic issues and convince working class Catholics that GOP programs are better at helping people rise up out of poverty.⁴⁵⁷ As long as Catholics view the GOP as the party of the rich, the Republicans will struggle to win Catholic votes. Furthermore, future Republican candidates must not let up on the abortion issue, and must continue to demonstrate that the GOP is serious about fighting for the culture of life.

U.S. politics has entered a new stage of history, faced with ethical and cultural issues like cloning, stem cell research and gay rights. How society reacts to it, and the resulting path the elected politicians travel down, will affect not only the current generation, but the future of this country. Because they focus on moral and cultural

⁴⁵⁶ Yonke.

⁴⁵⁷ Rossomando, p.40.

issues, American Catholics play a significant role in this decision, as they did in the 2004 presidential election.

Conclusion

Looking over American history, the Catholics' position in society has shifted and changed from their early days as poor immigrants. Catholics no longer all live in the same neighborhoods, belong to the same unions, work the same jobs in the same economic class, nor do they profess the same political beliefs. Once Catholics no longer felt the need to bond together politically in order to have a voice in society, a divide became evident. As America underwent a cultural change in the 1970s, many drifted from the Church, and those that remained active grew infuriated by issues such as abortion. Issues of morality began to take precedence in the Catholic mind over economic and labor issues. By 2004, there were two groups of Catholics, the inactives, who tended to be more liberal, and the actives, who were generally more conservative. However, there was some overlap between the two groups and their political ideology, mostly relating to which philosophy the individual adhered to: social justice or social renewal. The American Catholic voter of 2004 has progressed and developed greatly from the voter of earlier times.

The Catholic Church played a role in the American political scene, informing voters of the issues and helping to form the consciences of the faithful. While the Church will never instruct Catholics who to vote for, Church officials do not hesitate to speak out on certain issues or to provide voters with questions to consider. In 2004, the Church hierarchy emphasized the issues of gay marriage and abortion, giving only small mentions to their positions on the war in Iraq or economic and labor matters. Voters echoed the Church when they ranked moral issues as the most important factor in the

election. Messages and statements from the Vatican, the bishops and parish priests all continually hammered in the point that Catholics must not only be personally pro-life, but must vote with life in mind. Without explicitly stating it, the Church seemed to point voters to the pro-life candidate, George W. Bush.

Both Bush and John Kerry sought to win the Catholic vote, yet both by different means. Kerry emphasized his own Catholicism, attempting to identify with the many baby boomer Catholics who no longer agreed with the Church on every issue. Kerry was much more likely to win the votes of inactive or liberal, social justice Catholics, despite his own Catholicism.

Bush, however, won easily with many traditional, active Catholics despite his Protestant background. Studies show that voters do not care so much what the candidate's religion is, but rather, what his policies are. Bush's strong commitment to his faith and his dedication to pro-life issues greatly appealed to the active Catholic voter who sought to reverse what they perceived as rampant moral decline in society.

The issue of moral decline and renewal, especially relating to issues such as gay marriage and abortion, truly made the difference in the 2004 election. Bush was able to keep the focus on moral issues rather than the economy or foreign policy, bringing in the strongly religious voters from around the country. Especially with the Defense of Marriage Act on the ballot in 11 states, voter turnout soared. Bush carried not only the active Catholic vote, but the overall Catholic vote as well.

Many argue that there is no longer a Catholic vote with such a large political division in the Church. However, one could respond by stating that while Catholics used

to vote as one bloc, the majority also used to attend Mass and actively participate in their parish. Once one narrows down Catholics into those that are actively practicing their faith, a solid bloc emerges. The Catholic vote, made up of active Catholics, has swung from its Democratic background and focus on labor and economic issues, to a moral focus that is slowly shifting to the Republican Party, although the Catholic voter has yet to settle back into one party.

Appendix A

Questions for Believers⁴⁵⁸

1. After September 11, how can we build not only a safer world, but a better world? More just, more secure, more peaceful, more respectful of human life and dignity?
2. How will we protect the weakest in our midst--innocent unborn children? How will our nation resist what Pope John Paul II calls a "culture of death"? How can we keep our nation from turning to violence to solve some of its most difficult problems--abortion to deal with difficult pregnancies; the death penalty to combat crime; euthanasia and assisted suicide to deal with the burdens of age, illness, and disability; and war to address international disputes?
3. How will we address the tragic fact that more than 30,000 children die every day as a result of hunger, international debt, and lack of development around the world, as well as the fact that the younger you are, the more likely you are to be poor here in the richest nation on Earth?
4. How can our nation help parents raise their children with respect for life, sound moral values, a sense of hope, and an ethic of stewardship and responsibility? How can our society defend the central institution of marriage and better support families in their moral roles and responsibilities, offering them real choices and financial resources to obtain quality education and decent housing?
5. How will we address the growing number of families and individuals without affordable and accessible health care? How can health care better protect human life and respect human dignity?
6. How will our society combat continuing prejudice, overcome hostility toward immigrants and refugees, and heal the wounds of racism, religious bigotry, and other forms of discrimination?
7. How will our nation pursue the values of justice and peace in a world where injustice is common, desperate poverty widespread, and peace is too often overwhelmed by violence?
8. What are the responsibilities and limitations of families, community organizations, markets, and government? How can these elements of society work together to overcome poverty, pursue the common good, care for creation, and overcome injustice?
9. When should our nation use, or avoid the use of, military force--for what purpose, under what authority, and at what human cost?
10. How can we join with other nations to lead the world to greater respect for human life and dignity, religious freedom and democracy, economic justice, and care for God's creation?

⁴⁵⁸ "Faithful Citizenship."

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Appendix A

Questions for Believers¹

1. After September 11, how can we build not only a safer world, but a better world? more just, more secure, more peaceful, more respectful of human life and dignity?
2. How will we protect the weakest in our midst--innocent unborn children? How will our nation resist what Pope John Paul II calls a "culture of death"? How can we keep our nation from turning to violence to solve some of its most difficult problems--abortion to deal with difficult pregnancies; the death penalty to combat crime; euthanasia and assisted suicide to deal with the burdens of age, illness, and disability; and war to address international disputes?
3. How will we address the tragic fact that more than 30,000 children die every day as a result of hunger, international debt, and lack of development around the world, as well as the fact that the younger you are, the more likely you are to be poor here in the richest nation on Earth?
4. How can our nation help parents raise their children with respect for life, sound moral values, a sense of hope, and an ethic of stewardship and responsibility? How can our society defend the central institution of marriage and better support families in their moral roles and responsibilities, offering them real choices and financial resources to obtain quality education and decent housing?
5. How will we address the growing number of families and individuals without affordable and accessible health care? How can health care better protect human life and respect human dignity?
6. How will our society combat continuing prejudice, overcome hostility toward immigrants and refugees, and heal the wounds of racism, religious bigotry, and other forms of discrimination?
7. How will our nation pursue the values of justice and peace in a world where injustice is common, desperate poverty widespread, and peace is too often overwhelmed by violence?
8. What are the responsibilities and limitations of families, community organizations, markets, and government? How can these elements of society work together to overcome poverty, pursue the common good, care for creation, and overcome injustice?
9. When should our nation use, or avoid the use of, military force--for what purpose, under what authority, and at what human cost?
10. How can we join with other nations to lead the world to greater respect for human life and dignity, religious freedom and democracy, economic justice, and care for God's creation?

¹ "Faithful Citizenship."