

Christian,

Thanks for speaking up brother – I know you care about us and Holy Mother Church. I am proud that you are thinking through this very deep issue that affects all faithful Catholics. Here is a hypothetical issue that could have happened during the Presidential election. If two pro-aborts (Rudy vs. Hilary) would have won the nomination, what is a Catholic to do? This involves making a careful distinction between voting and actively supporting a non-negotiable policy. The crux of the argument is that voting for a candidate is not the same thing as voting for the act itself, and that a candidate's support for an intrinsically evil act is an expected but unintended consequence of voting for that person. In other words, a person is not voting for more or less abortion; there is no "on-off switch" that gives you abortion if you vote A and no abortion (or even less abortion) if you vote B.

Before going any further, let's look at what then-Cardinal Ratzinger wrote in his [famous letter](#) to Cardinal McCarrick back in 2004:

"A Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in evil, and so unworthy to present himself for Holy Communion, if he were to deliberately vote for a candidate precisely because of the candidate's permissive stand on abortion and/or euthanasia. When a Catholic does not share a candidate's stand in favor of abortion and/or euthanasia, but votes for that candidate for other reasons, it is considered remote material cooperation, which can be permitted in the presence of proportionate reasons."

This is key. [Formal cooperation in evil](#) means that a person "freely participates in the action(s) of a principal agent, or shares in the agent's intention". Clearly a voter's proximity to an intrinsically evil act is a lot less than a legislator's, and voting for such a candidate can be licit for proportionately serious reasons. More precisely, an act that may lead to foreseeable evil consequences can be permitted if the act in itself is not evil; the evil effect is not intended as a means or an end, and the good attained is proportionate to the evil arising from the act.*

Voting itself is not an evil act. And clearly, if you support the evil act when you vote, then all bets are off. But what if you are conscientiously opposed to abortion, when can you vote for a pro-abortion politician? Well, you would need to ask a number of questions. First, how much power will the politician have to affect the evil act? Second, would he or she be effective in bringing about the policy? Third, if the policy is enacted, would it be effective in achieving its ends? And after this, the relative gravity of the good and evil effects must be considered. Nothing here is certain, and the person must act in the realm of probability, which of course allows for prudential judgment (For more detail, see *Moral Theology for the Voting Booth and Voting and "Non-Negotiable" Issues* by Christopher Decker, 2006).

James Akin from Catholic Answers addresses our dilemma in the VOTERS GUIDE FOR CATHOLICS. He was asked: **What if there is no candidate who is "acceptable?"**

James Akin: "In some political races, each candidate takes a wrong position on one or more of the 5 non-negotiables. In such a case, you may vote for the candidate who takes the fewest such positions or who seems least likely to be able to advance immoral legislation, or you may choose to vote for no one."

In hindsight, I should have said on the radio: to "vote for the candidate deemed less likely to advance such a morally flawed position and more likely to pursue other authentic human goods" (U.S. Bishops no.35 – see below) or I should have said, "it is morally acceptable to vote for the candidate who will do less harm." This is not "choosing the lesser of two evils" (I should not have used that language).

WASHINGTON (November 14, 2007) – The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) overwhelmingly approved a statement called *Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States*. The statement urges Catholics to be involved in public life and to use the values of their faith to shape their political choice. It was approved at the bishops' general meeting in Baltimore, November 12-15.

34. Catholics often face difficult choices about how to vote. This is why it is so important to vote according to a well-formed conscience that perceives the proper relationship among moral goods. A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who takes a position in favor of an intrinsic evil, such as abortion or racism, if the voter's intent is to support that position. In such cases, a Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in

grave evil. At the same time, a voter should not use a candidate's opposition to an intrinsic evil to justify indifference or in attentiveness to other important moral issues involving human life and dignity.

35. There may be times when a Catholic who rejects a candidate's unacceptable position may decide to vote for that candidate for other morally grave reasons. Voting in this way would be permissible for only truly grave moral reasons, not to advance narrow interest, or partisan preference or to ignore a fundamental evil.

36. When all candidates hold a position in favor of an intrinsic evil, the conscientious voter faces a dilemma. The voter may decide to take the extraordinary step of not voting for any candidate, or after careful deliberation, may decide to vote for the candidate deemed less likely to advance such a morally flawed position and more likely to pursue other authentic human goods.

37. When making these decisions, it is essential for Catholics to be guided by a well-formed conscience that recognizes that all issues do not carry the same moral weight and that the moral obligation to oppose intrinsically evil acts has a special claim on our consciences and our actions. These decisions should take into account a candidate's commitments, character, integrity and ability to influence a given issue. In the end, this is a decision made by each Catholic guided by a conscience formed by Catholic moral teaching.

I admit, there are no perfect candidates because 'Our Lord Jesus Christ' and 'Our Lady' are not running for office, so we have a hodge-podge of sinners to choose from. Living in this fallen world oftentimes does not present us the best alternatives. Sometimes I just have to pinch my nose and vote for the person who is less flawed. For example, in California, we had Meg Whitman who is wrong on 1 of the 4 life issues and Jerry Brown who is wrong on 4 out of 4 of the life issues. Meg has a business background, she knows how to jumpstart business using the free market system while Brown is a **40 YEAR CAREER POLITICIAN! HE HAS NEVER RUN A BUSINESS NOR CREATED ONE PRIVATE SECTOR JOB and he left the state with a deficit last time and he raised our taxes when he was governor back in the 1980s.**

Let me also say that from the outset that I believe the Democrats are an evil party and I believe the republicans have good principles but seem to be morally gutless. I am a 'conservative,' that is the label that I wear proudly, because I want to conserve tradition which I define as 'Faith, Family and God. It just happens to be that the Republicans are a lot closer to my value system that I embrace as a Catholic that could change in the future although I doubt it because I think the Democrats have sold their soul to the extreme liberal elites in our society.

A little bit of history. Most people don't know that the:

1) KKK arose from the Southern democrats and terrorized republicans (both white and black).

http://en.citizendium.org/wiki/Ku_Klux_Klan

http://kelticklankirk.com/Southern_White_Knights_KKK_Introduction.htm

<http://books.google.com/books?id=SHbV-7EyNUYC&pg=PA37&lpg=PA37&dq=kkk+party+originated+with+the+southern+democrats&source=web&ots=kTowIh2IRn&sig=5WwGVNnq9VZ60zohQ8RuXshfU2A>

2) Republicans passed the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to abolish slavery, which gave blacks due process and the right to vote. The democrats tried to stop this legislation, but failed.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abolitionism>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution

3) Abraham Lincoln, a Republican president, was the person who abolished slavery.

4) Abraham Lincoln was shot by **John Wilkes Booth**, who was an [angry](#) Southern Democrat... Booth supported the Confederacy in the [American Civil War](#) and hoped killing Abraham Lincoln would prevent freed [slaves](#) from getting the vote. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Wilkes_Booth

5) Many forget how Republican Abraham Lincoln's ill-advised choice of a Democrat as a running mate in 1864 gave John Wilkes Booth a good excuse to assassinate him. Upon assuming the presidency, Andrew Johnson (a Democrat) immediately began doing his best to ruin the Reconstruction effort by vetoing the

Civil Rights Act and by repealing the Freedmen's Bureau legislation guaranteeing each ex-slave 40 acres and a mule. Worse, he allowed the Southern states to pass the repressive Jim Crow laws prohibiting blacks from voting, holding office, marrying whites, and so forth. With African-Americans denied the vote, this signaled the demise of the Republican Party in the region, leading to the notion of the Solid South, meaning solidly Democratic. With no checks or balances, the next 100 years would be marked by widespread lynching, vigilantism and the rise of the Ku Klux Klan. Speaking of the Klan, did you know that Harry Truman (Democrat President) joined it in 1924? (**Wrong on Race: The Democratic Party's Buried Past** by Bruce Bartlett).

6) Historically, the perpetrators and the promoters of racism and racist policy in the United States have been Southern Democrats. According to Alveda C. King, who is the niece of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Dr. King did not align himself with The Democratic Party because Southern Democrats were the individuals with attack dogs, cattle prods and lynch ropes denying African-Americans their rights as they enforced the segregationist policies of Jim Crow. Compounding this fact is also a King Family History of Republican Party Membership in which Martin King's father, his grandfather as well as his brother were all Republican party members. Indeed, historically, voting trends among African-Americans indicate that they overwhelmingly voted for candidates from the Republican party because the Republican party was known as the party of Abraham Lincoln (<http://hiphoprepublican.com/politics/outreach/2009/07/27/was-dr-martin-luther-king-jr-a-republican/>).

7) It should come as no surprise that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Republican. In that era, almost all black Americans were Republicans. Why? From its founding in 1854 as the anti-slavery party until today, the Republican Party has championed freedom and civil rights for blacks. And as one pundit so succinctly stated, the Democrat Party is as it always has been, the party of the four S's: slavery, secession, segregation and now socialism (<http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?print=yes&id=16500>).

8) Jackie Robinson, first black professional baseball player was a Republican. (<http://www.nbna.info/index.cfm?fuseaction=pages.blackgop#denzelwashington>).

Here is a book written by a democrat who speaks from his heart about the hatred from that party leveled at Catholicism:

Can a Catholic Be a Democrat? by [David R. Carlin](#) (Author)

Editorial Reviews

When author David Carlin was a young man, it was scandalous for a good Catholic to be anything but a good Democrat. In the pews, pubs, and union halls of America's cities, millions of poor European immigrants and their children pledged allegiance to the Church of Rome and the party of FDR. All that changed in the 1960s, with the rise of a new kind of Democrat: wealthy, secular, ideological. Even as Carlin served the party he loved - twelve years as a Rhode Island state senator and once a candidate for Congress - he could only watch in dismay as its national leaders abandoned their blue-collar, pro-life, and religious constituencies and took up with NOW, Hollywood, and the abortion lobby.

So complete this transformation has been that we no longer speak of a natural alliance between Catholics and the Democratic Party. Indeed, Carlin here asks whether today it's even possible to be both a faithful Catholic and a Democratic true believer. A veteran sociologist, philosophy professor, and author of *The Decline and Fall of the Catholic Church in America*, Carlin shows how his party and his religion have taken opposite sides in the Culture War. On issues of human life, sex, faith, morality, suffering - and the public policies that stem from them - the modern, secularist Democratic Party has become the enemy of Catholicism; indeed, of all traditional religions.

Carlin shatters the excuses that Catholic Democratic politicians employ in a vain attempt to reconcile their faith and their votes, and then, with what he calls the "political equivalent of a broken heart," he examines his own political conscience. As a faithful Catholic and a Democrat approaching his seventieth year, must he now leave the party he's called home since birth? David Carlin's arguments challenge all religious Democrats to ask themselves the same question.

To give you a football analogy that was taught to me by Fr Leo Patalinghug (Moral Theologian at Mount St Mary's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland who received his Ph.D. in Rome at the Angelicum); if we vote for a democrat we in the pro-life movement are going to lose yards big time. [Here](#) is an example of what I am talking about. Had Rudy Guilliani won for President, he promised on every radio and T.V. channel that I have seen him on that he is going to appoint conservative Supreme Court justices like the 4 solid Catholics that are there right now.

Let's remember, that a president cannot overturn Roe vs. Wade, only the Supreme Court can and Hilary and Obama have promised that they will appoint more social liberal secular justices (like Ruth Bader Ginsburg) which will destroy our pro-life efforts. We must be shrewd, if Rudy wins, because he has the benefit of the sacraments, it would be much easier to prayerfully convert him fully to a pro-life view than it would be to convert Hilary or Obama who don't have the benefit and power of the sacraments to provide that change of heart. Because Rudy is Catholic, he has a sacramental character. We stand a much better chance of changing his heart than his democratic protestant opponents who have never received the Holy Eucharist which is the Sacrament of charity that changes our hearts.

God Bless You,

Your west coast brother in Christ,

Jesse Romero <><