

Diocese of Green Bay



Bishop David L. Ricken

Forming Conscience for Faithful Citizenship Letter

Press Statement – October 27, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In response to inquiries in the media regarding my bulletin insert letter, I release the following statement:

I wrote my letter out of my love and concern for people.

My letter should not be misunderstood as an endorsement of any political candidates or parties; the Church does not endorse political candidates or political parties.

As a religious leader, I am speaking about important moral matters that affect our lives. Some things are always wrong, no matter what the circumstances. That is what I mean by intrinsically evil. We should always strive to do good and avoid evil.

I wrote my letter in light of the document of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Conscience for Faithful Citizenship*. For example, the document states:

“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 inattentiveness to other important moral issues involving human life and dignity.”
(FCFC 34)

“In 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 to be made by each Catholic guided by a conscience formed by Catholic moral teaching.”
(FCFC37)

Again, my letter should not be misunderstood. I am not endorsing any political candidates or parties. As a religious leader, I am speaking about important moral matters.

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Who we are: The Catholic Diocese of Green Bay works to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ by helping people in need and by providing academic, leadership and spiritual formation opportunities to parish and school leaders. Established in 1868, the diocese is composed of 345,000 Catholics in 16 counties: Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Forest, Kewaunee, Langlade, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago.

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