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CNS documentary service

Statements on Upcoming Election

Cardinal Tobin, Archbishops
Coakley and Lori, and
Bishops Zubik, Estévez,
McElroy, McKnight and
Malesic

With a divisive national election set to take place Nov. 3, Catholic bishops have offered their perspectives to their local churches. Most bishops who have released statements or columns on the election addressed major issues that have surfaced in the past few years: the coronavirus pandemic, increasing displays of racism and a lack of civility in political debate. They pointed to the U.S. bishops' quadrennial document on Catholic participation in political life, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship," that

"Our faith must inform our politics."

calls abortion the preeminent issue facing the country. (See Origins, Vol. 49, No. 30, for the latest update to the document.) Bishop David A. Zubik of Pittsburgh said, "It is not my role nor can it ever be for me to tell anyone for whom to vote," a point echoed by many bishops. Bishops also noted that each presidential candidate and each political party has flaws when looking at their policies through the lens of Catholic teaching. A sampling of statements follows.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, Newark

Whom should we vote for in the upcoming election? Can faithful Catholics who are conscientious about their religious beliefs and fundamental human values vote for candidates or political parties that have taken positions that are contrary to our deepest convictions?

Like many Catholics, I have spent considerable time prayerfully contemplating the untenable nature of such questions, because both of the national party platforms contain seriously flawed moral positions. While I cannot and do not endorse one candidate over another, I think faithful Catholics, and all Americans, must challenge key planks of both the Republican and Democratic platforms, noting that one party seeks to remove the unborn child from the moral equation and the other party endorses capital punishment and fails to treat migrants with human dignity by taking

continued on page 374



contents

- 373 Statements on Upcoming Election
by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, Archbishop Paul S. Coakley, Archbishop William E. Lori, Bishop David A. Zubik, Bishop Felipe J. Estévez, Bishop Robert W. McElroy, Bishop W. Shawn McKnight and Bishop Edward C. Malesic
- 382 Letter on Potential Vaccine for COVID-19
by Sister Mary Haddad, RSM
- 385 Message to Pontifical Academy of Sciences
by Pope Francis
- 386 Speech to Moneyval on Financial Transparency
by Pope Francis
- 387 Facing Racism in Society and in Our Hearts
by Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory
- 388 Datebook
- 388 On File

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