

## An Examen Prayer for Our Elections

(Composed by parishioner Connie Widmer, with excerpts from Jim Martin S.J. Pray this prayer before you vote, or if you already have, let it guide you into civic or political action.)

To begin, make sure you're comfortable, and relaxed, and just open to whatever message God may have for you at this time.

Let us pray:

*Loving God, we ask you to guide us during this important election season. Help us to understand the Gospels, in which Jesus reveals his path of love, mercy and compassion, especially toward those who are struggling in any way. And help us to understand how this Gospel message should influence the choices we make in life, including those we make at election time. Enable us to vote wisely with this in mind.*

Examen on Elections

As always, we start with THANKSGIVING:

What am I grateful for as I think about the coming elections:

That I live in a country where I have a right to vote  
That I am free to make election choices based on what I want to have happen  
That there is room in our system for varying opinions  
That there are some good and moral people willing to devote themselves to public service.

Tell God why these things are important to you - or Add other things that come to your mind and express your gratitude to God for them.

Then let's turn to what we need to do to prepare for voting as a moral act.

PETITION: And we pray:

Loving God , I ask for light to know myself and my motives as you know me.  
I ask for a clearer vision to view issues as you view them,  
I ask for courage to face my biases .  
Help me to be aware of any bias that gets in the way of  
my making sound and moral decisions

I commit to honesty as I face the choices on the ballot.  
Most choices will be for candidates running for a specific office.

What do I know and what do I need to know about these candidates? We'll never know all that would be helpful to know, but we can ask ourselves:  
Do I have good reason to believe this candidate will uphold basic values and make moral choices when he/she is in office?

REVIEW: Loving God, guide me as I call to mind things that will be affected by the results of our elections. (Most of these are taken from "Pope Francis' Priorities")

How will the poor and destitute be treated?  
Will the infirm and elderly be cared for?  
Will the sick and dying be treated with dignity?  
Will we support those suffering financial hardships?  
Will we welcome immigrants as our brothers and sisters?  
Will we protect the life of the unborn?  
Will we uphold the dignity of all people and races?  
Will we respect those who differ from us?  
Will we protect the environment that nourishes our planet?  
Will we devote money and energy toward promoting peace, not just being ready for war?

These are all Gospel issues. Have I considered them as I make my choices?

Which choices are troubling to me because there are so many aspects to consider?

Which choices are challenging because my immediate impulse in facing them may not be Christ-like.

RESPONSE: Take time to bring to God whatever it is about these issues or the election that concerns you most.

One final question: As we face tomorrow and the coming days before the election, what can we do to make this time a sacred time?

Closing - (based on Jim Martin's prayer)

*Loving God, help me to be someone who is ready to care for, advocate for and even suffer for those on the margins. I ask you to aid our civic leaders and those running for*

*election and grant them a spirit of wisdom. Bless our nation; crown it with compassion, support it with your care, and nurture it, and us, with your love. Amen.*

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#### Prayer Before An Election (USCCB)

O God, as the election approaches,

we seek to better understand the issues and concerns that confront our city/state/country,

and how the Gospel compels us to respond as faithful citizens in our community.

We ask for eyes that are free from blindness

so that we might see each other as brothers and sisters,

one and equal in dignity,

especially those who are victims of abuse and violence, deceit and poverty.

We ask for ears that will hear the cries of children unborn and those abandoned,

Men and women oppressed because of race or creed, religion or gender.

We ask for minds and hearts that are open to hearing the voice of leaders who will bring us closer to your Kingdom.

We pray for discernment

so that we may choose leaders who hear your Word,

live your love,

and keep in the ways of your truth

as they follow in the steps of Jesus and his Apostles

and guide us to your Kingdom of justice and peace.

We ask this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.