



Rick Musacchio
Executive Director
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September 17, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is often said that we live in a time of never-ending political campaigns, and it seems like those campaigns only become more contentious. Soon, campaigning for the 2026 elections will bring this issue to the forefront.

For decades, Internal Revenue Service regulations have strictly prohibited churches and nonprofit organizations from endorsing candidates for political office. Recent changes indicate that political endorsement may become a possibility. However, recognizing that the platforms of neither of the major political parties fully embrace the broad range of Catholic Teaching, the three dioceses together as the Tennessee Catholic Conference will maintain the longstanding practice that our parishes, ministries, and entities will neither support nor oppose candidates or political parties for office.

1. There should be no campaigning or campaign materials in any form at any event on a church entity's property or at an event sponsored by an exempt entity.
2. If a candidate for office attends a function open to the public, such as a picnic, fish fry, gala or fundraising event, there should be no campaigning, distribution of voter materials, campaign materials, etc. allowed.
3. If a parish maintains a bulletin, website or news release, there should be no references to candidates or political parties, either gratis or paid advertising.
4. Yard signs for or against a particular candidate or political party, or any other type of campaign materials are not allowed on a church entity's property.
5. Photos linking a candidate or political party to a church entity, receptions honoring candidates, allowing a candidate to speak on a church entity's property or at an event sponsored by a church entity are also not permitted.
6. Very simply, anything which could be interpreted as supporting or opposing a candidate or political party is not permitted.

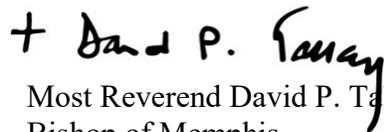
We are fully aware that some candidates may be parishioners, alumni, or great supporters of a parish, school or one of our other organizations or ministries. However, for purposes of the prohibition against any political intervention activity for or against a candidate, these individuals cannot be treated any differently from any other candidate for office.

Finally, this prohibition against any activity supporting or opposing a particular candidate or political party should not be confused with the freedom, and perhaps obligation, to lift up the center of Catholic Social Teaching: dignity of the human person, solidarity, subsidiarity, and the common good. A few issues are, but not limited to, anti-abortion and pro-life positions, the need for comprehensive immigration reform, the need for affordable housing, school choice, non-discrimination, anti-violence, and a host of other moral positions embedded in our social teaching.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend J. Mark Spalding
Bishop of Nashville



Most Reverend David P. Talley
Bishop of Memphis



Most Reverend Mark Beckman
Bishop of Knoxville



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Executive Director
Tennessee Catholic Conference