There are ten easy steps to having a clear conscience in regard to how you vote on Election Day:

1. **Vote!**
   
   First, make sure you actually vote. Election Day is Tuesday, November 4. Voting is a moral obligation. Take advantage of early voting if your state allows it, and if you’re going to be out of state or are homebound, use an absentee ballot! Bring your voting decisions to prayer.

2. **Know the Candidates.**
   
   Be sure you know where the candidates stand on the issues.

3. **Reject the Disqualified.**
   
   If a candidate came forward and said, “I support terrorism,” you wouldn’t say, “I disagree with you on terrorism, but what’s your health care plan?” Similarly, those who permit the destruction of innocent life by abortion disqualify themselves from consideration.

4. **Distinguish Policy from Principle.**
   
   Most disagreements between candidates and political platforms do not have to do with principle (e.g., a “Right to Crime?”), but rather with policy (“How do we reduce crime?”). But the dispute over whether there is a right to life does deal with principle, and is therefore more fundamental.

5. **Weigh other issues properly.**
   
   Not all issues have equal weight. The Catholic Church teaches that war and capital punishment, for example, may at times be morally justified, but abortion and euthanasia never are.

6. **Keep your loyalty focused on Jesus.**
   
   Your loyalty to Jesus Christ must be stronger than your loyalty to any candidate.

7. **Remember, the Party Matters.**
   
   Elections do not only put individual candidates into power; they put political parties into power. Consider what the parties stand for, and how the outcome of the elections affects the balance of power.

8. **Distinguish “choosing evil” from “limiting evil.”**
   
   If two opposing candidates both support abortion, then ask: Which of the two candidates will do less harm to unborn children? This is not “choosing the lesser of two evils,” but rather choosing to limit an evil, and that is a good.

9. **Support the candidate with more than your vote!**
   
   Additional activities include donating to the campaign, volunteering for the campaign, handing out signs and bumper stickers, and praying for the candidate.

   Elections are not contests between two candidates. They are contests between two teams. The bigger and more active team will bring in the most votes.

10. **Mobilize as many other voters as possible!**
    
    Each of us has one vote, but each of us can mobilize hundreds, even thousands of votes. Focus on mobilizing those who agree with you rather than convincing those who don’t. If you can take the day off on Election Day, do so. Spend the day contacting people by phone and email, reminding them to vote, and helping them get to the polls. Having done all this, rejoice in a clear conscience, and trust the Lord to bring about the victory for a Culture of Life.

   Find out more about what you, your groups, and your Churches can do at wwwPoliticalResponsibility.com!
James Foley, the American journalist who was captured and beheaded while covering the war in Syria, was a practicing Catholic who took great solace in his faith. Foley was a parishioner of Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church in Rochester, New Hampshire. On August 19, 2014, the Islamic State released a video of Foley’s beheading, and called his death retaliation for the U.S. airstrikes in Iraq. Many Catholic journalists have since speculated that Foley could be considered a martyr.

Catholic Blogger Pia de Solenni wrote in a piece on August 22, 2014 for Pathos.com, “Martyrdom is not something that happened a long time ago in ancient Rome, or more recently in the founding of the Americas a few hundred years ago. It’s something that’s happening a lot, most—if not all—of the time. Pope Francis is well aware of this, more so than most of us.” Pope Francis called the Foley family on the phone on August 21, 2014, speaking to several members of the family about Foley’s sacrifice. Michael Foley, James’ younger brother, said that Pope Francis referred to James’ death as martyrdom during that conversation.

Foley spoke about his Catholic faith after his release from captivity in Libya in 2011. He was quoted in Marquette Magazine as saying, “I began to pray in release from captivity in Libya in 2011. He was quoted to James’ death as martyrdom during that conversation. Pope Francis called the Foley family on the phone on August 21, 2014, speaking to several members of the family about Foley’s sacrifice. Michael Foley, James’ younger brother, said that Pope Francis referred to James’ death as martyrdom during that conversation. Pope Francis called the Foley family on the phone on August 21, 2014, speaking to several members of the family about Foley’s sacrifice. Michael Foley, James’ younger brother, said that Pope Francis referred to James’ death as martyrdom during that conversation.

In her August 22 piece, Pia de Solenni summarizes the state of martyrdom in today’s world, saying, “With the beheading of James Foley and the increasing reports of his Catholic faith, the word ‘martyr’ is becoming more popular. This is a sign of the times. Pope Francis has recently considered the canonization cause of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, who spent his life advocating for human rights in his country.”

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The words “and her unborn child,” follow the names of eleven victims of the 9/11 attacks in the memorial at Ground Zero in New York City. The tribute recognizes the lives of unborn babies and mourns the losses of their mothers, paying homage to the smallest victims. The 13th anniversary of 9/11 brought light again to this recognition of life within the womb.