

JUSTPEACE: FEBRUARY 2012

NEWS AND ISSUES

PARISH VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES

A Focus on the Following Theme of Catholic Social Teaching:

-Call to Family, Community and Participation

In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. We want to act on the Church's moral principles and become more involved. For some this means running for office, working within political parties, and communicating concerns to elected officials.

For others, participation in political life simply means voting.

Parish Social Ministries — Peace and Justice, Social Concerns, Respect Life — can encourage parishioners to vote by conducting voter registration drives. This coordinated effort between ministries can be an effective means to motivate all parishioners to register.

Voting, and registering to vote, is not an ideological or partisan activity; it is essentially an American and Catholic responsibility.

The deadline to register in time to vote in the Oregon May primaries is April 24. Each parish can decide when a voter registration drive is best for them. Considering Spring Break, Lent and Easter, **an ideal time to conduct a parish voter registration drive may be April 15 and April 22, the two weeks after Easter.**

Practical Tips and Steps for Successful Voter Registration

1. Promote the Voter Registration Drive

- Put up posters.
- Announce your voter registration drive from the pulpit and in the bulletin
- Give a brief announcement on the importance of voting

- Who should you register?
- First-time voters
- People who have legally changed their names
- People who have moved
- People whose signatures have changed dramatically (young people tend to change their signatures. Because of Oregon's vote by mail, all signatures on the ballots are digitally matched against the appropriate signature in the database. If a signature has changed dramatically, the ballot will be rejected.)

2. Get registration forms from your local county elections office

- At the bottom is a list of all county office locations within the Archdiocese of Portland
- Be inclusive and get both English and Spanish Oregon Voter Registration cards

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3. Hold a training session for your members who will commit to registering voters.

-Walk volunteers through the steps of registering people

-People can register to vote at any time during the year, **but to vote in the May 15 Primary, the deadline to register is April 24.**

-Voters must be U.S. citizens, residents of Oregon, and at least 18 years old; 17-year-olds can register if they will be 18 by the next primary.

-Remind volunteers that they during the registration drive they are representing the Catholic Church. During the voter registration drive they must be non-partisan.

-The purpose of the voter registration drive is to register parishioners to vote. Therefore, *during* your voter registration drive within a Catholic church there cannot be any discussion or materials on specific issues.

4. Hold your registration drive

-Make sure you have the following accessories:

- tables
- volunteers to man the tables
- registration forms (English and Spanish)
- clipboards, allowing registrants can take their time sitting, reading and filling out the form
- pens

-Voters must be U.S. citizens

-Voters must be residents of Oregon

-Voters must be at least 18 years old; 17-year-olds can register if they will be 18 by the next primary.

-Be prepared to help anyone who has trouble completing the form

-Check applications to see they are complete before turning them in

-Ensure that the information is legible

-Party affiliation—one of the questions—only matters to determine which partisan candidates who can select from **during the primaries.**

--Remind volunteers that they during the registration drive they are representing the Catholic Church. During the voter registration drive they must be non-partisan.

-Remind volunteers that *during* your voter registration drive within a Catholic church there cannot be any discussion or materials on specific issues.

Do not authorize distribution of partisan political materials or biased voter education materials (those that support or oppose—or exhibit bias for or against—any candidate or party) on church property, in church publications, or at church activities. Authorization should be given only after materials have been approved by your diocesan attorney.

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5. After your registration drive

-Collect the completed voter registration forms and deliver them to your county elections office. **Collected registration cards must be delivered to the county elections office within five (5) calendar days of being signed by the registrant otherwise they are invalid.**

County Offices

Benton

120 NW 4th St.
Corvallis, OR 97330

Clackamas

1710 Red Soils Court
Oregon City, OR 97045

Clatsop

820 Exchange St.
Astoria, OR 97103

Columbia

Columbia County Courthouse
230 Strand St.
St. Helens, OR 97051-2089

Coos

Coos County Courthouse
250 N. Baxter
Coquille, OR 97423-1899

Curry

29821 Ellensburg Avenue
Gold Beach, OR 97444

Douglas

1036 SE Douglas Rm.124
Roseburg, OR 97470

Jackson

1101 W. Main St. Suite 201
Medford, OR 97501-2369

Josephine

500 NW 6th Street
Grants Pass, OR 97526

Lane

275 W 10th Ave
Eugene, OR 97401-3008

Lincoln

225 W. Olive St.
Newport, OR 97365

Linn

300 4th Ave. SW
Albany, OR 97321

Marion

4263 Commercial St. SE #300
Salem, OR 97302-3987

Multnomah

1040 SE Morrison St.
Portland, OR 97214-2495

Tillamook

201 Laurel Ave.
Tillamook, OR 97141

Washington

3700 SW Murray Blvd.
Beaverton, OR 97005

Yamhill

414 NE Evans St.
McMinnville, OR 97128