



**A**s I travel throughout New Hampshire, people are eager to share their concerns. Many are worried about a loved one suffering from addiction to heroin or another opiate. Others worry about safety in a world where we seem to expect violence as an everyday occurrence. I hear about the anxieties of caring for elderly parents, some of whom are struggling because after a lifetime of effort in a workplace or caring for others, they cannot make ends meet. Still others are worried about putting food on the table for their families, and those without a home fear that it will be a harsh winter, making it too difficult to sleep outside. Many come to me angry and anguishing over the unborn children lost every day to abortion and the women left behind, grieving for the child lost.

In the midst of these worries, they do not know if they can bring themselves to vote. "I can't vote for either of the candidates," they say. People bringing all these worries and issues forward, but after decades and decades of voting, they do not think their vote matters anymore.

So let's imagine then, what would happen if Catholics failed to make their voices heard. What if we did not vote? What if we did not speak up for the most vulnerable? The poor do not have lobbyists, so who would speak alongside them if we Catholics were not there? Bills promoting doctor-prescribed suicide have been defeated because Catholics have contacted their state legislators and explained the impact these measures would have on the elderly and individuals with disabilities.

If Catholics were not there speaking up, surely doctor-prescribed suicide would be legal in New Hampshire by now. As Catholics, we bring to the public square a consistent moral framework and broad experience serving those in need – we cannot let that voice be lost.

While we will certainly struggle with our vote when it comes to the election of one office, we must remember there are many important elections taking place this fall. We will vote for president but we also will vote for a U.S. senator and governor as well as our state senators and representatives and other local officials, and it is important to give all these elections serious consideration. Our state and local elected officials have much influence on many of the concerns New Hampshire citizens face every day. So, pray hard, read much, ask

questions, pray again, and vote.

In this issue of *Parable*, you will find *Voting for the Common Good*, a summary of the call to political responsibility. I have included this insert to provide a summary of the issues the bishops of the United States have offered as policy goals that we hope will guide Catholics as they form their consciences and reflect on the moral dimensions of their public choices. The insert also includes answers to questions I am frequently asked about elections, candidates and voting. I hope you find this information useful as you make your final decisions before the primary and general elections this fall.

There are many serious issues before us. These issues are not vague or academic – people in New Hampshire struggle every day. We can let these anxieties consume us and stay home on the day of the primary and general elections. Or, we can let our voices be heard this fall by researching the issues and candidates and getting out to vote. And we can promise that we will not stop there but we will communicate our concerns to our elected officials and not wait for each election cycle to become informed. Let's work with our legislators to make a difference. ■



■ Bishop Peter A. Libasci is the Tenth Bishop of the Diocese of Manchester.

# VOTING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE



## WHEN DO I VOTE?

- Sept. 6: Last Day to Register to Vote in State Primary Election\*
- Sept. 13: State Primary Election Day
- Oct. 29: Last Day to Register to Vote in General Election\*
- Nov. 8: General Election Day

*\*You also may register at the polls on Election Day*



## WHERE DO I REGISTER TO VOTE?

- At your town or city clerk's office by the deadlines listed above.
- With your community's Supervisors of the Checklist. By law, they are required to meet on the Saturday 10 days prior to each election. Check your local newspaper(s) or call your clerk's office for the days and time of the meeting.
- Qualified individuals also may register to vote at the polling place on Election Day at all elections.

## WHERE DO I VOTE?

- To find your polling place and the hours when the polls will be open, visit [sos.nh.gov](http://sos.nh.gov). Click Elections Division at the top, and then select Polling Places from the dropdown menu.
- Call your town or city clerk's office to ask for the location and hours for your polling place.



## WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING WITH ME TO REGISTER TO VOTE?

- Proof of age, citizenship, and domicile.



## WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING WITH ME WHEN I VOTE?

- New Hampshire has a Voter ID law, and at the polls on Election Day, you will be asked to present a valid form of photo identification.
- For more information about the New Hampshire Voter ID law, visit [sos.nh.gov/voterid.aspx](http://sos.nh.gov/voterid.aspx).

I VOTED TODAY