

YOUR VOTE COUNTS



AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND GENERAL ELECTION 14 OCTOBER 2023



“The Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Auckland has put together this leaflet to consider some election issues in the light of our faith. The Gospels and Catholic Social Teaching point to a care and concern for our neighbours especially the poor and vulnerable. This is what should inform our vote.”

— Bishop Steve Lowe

Housing

Care for the poor is at the heart of Gospel teachings and providing adequate and affordable housing is fundamental. Housing is also a basic human right recognised in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

It is the responsibility of a Government to ensure that all NZers, especially the poorest are adequately housed. Governments cannot leave it to the Market to determine who can or cannot have a home.

For many years NZ has had a housing crisis. There is an inadequate supply of houses for those whose only option is to rely on the Government to provide a roof over their heads. The waiting list for public housing has increased from around 5000 in 2017 to more than 24000 at the end of June 2023. Lack of adequate and affordable housing is both a cause and a result of family poverty in NZ.

Market rentals are unaffordable for many people and families. Long term tenancies are the exception rather than the rule.

Which political party or coalition is most likely to address tenancy issues so as to provide more stability for tenants?



In deciding who to vote for in the election consider which political party or group is most likely to address the huge shortfall of public housing?



Child Poverty

As a country we continue to live with insufficient base rates of Social Welfare payments to some of our most vulnerable families that has led to decades of intergeneration poverty.

We need significant action to address this massive injustice that prevents the poorest and most vulnerable in society being able to genuinely participate in building a decent society for all.

Substantially increasing the base benefit for families in line with that recommended by the Social Welfare Expert Advisory Group would enable so many families to support themselves with dignity.

It would also start New Zealand on the road to reverse the march of child poverty that is so unnecessarily blighting so many lives.



Where do the parties and candidates in your electorate stand on lifting the basic level of benefits for those in greatest need?

Since 1891 Catholic Social Teaching has emphasised the importance of Just Wages and providing all with basic needs to live and thrive. The more change is delayed the more children are suffering, damaging their development for life and making it more difficult to attend school on a regular basis.

What commitment do the parties and candidates in your electorate have to ensuring that workers are paid wages that cover their cost of living?

Human Life

Respect for human life 'is always manifested in a flesh and blood person: the newly-conceived child, a poor marginalised person, a sick person suffering from discouragement or a terminal illness, a person who has lost their job and cannot find work, a refugee or ghettoised migrant...life manifests itself concretely in people.'¹

¹Pope Francis (2020)

Which parties and candidates in your electorate will best support efforts to redress the erosion of respect for human life in our 2020 abortion and 2021 euthanasia legislation?

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Any incoming Government needs to honour with goodwill the covenant entered into by the Crown and Māori, on which this nation is founded.¹

Where do the parties and candidates in your electorate stand on involving whānau, hapu and iwi Māori in decision-making processes?

The Environment

We are in a climate change crisis that 'could equally be called an economic crisis, or a poverty crisis. Its public face is the suffering of the poor and the degradation of our environment...'²

Recent weather events show how devastating to people's lives climate change can be. If we don't lower our emissions they will continue to steal our future.



Which candidates and parties will give best chance for our younger and future generations to live in a habitable world that is full of life and diversity?

¹ See <https://www.catholic.org.nz/about-us/bishops-statements/a-statement-on-the-treaty-of-waitangi-in-todays-perspective/>

² NZCBC Statement on Environmental Issues (2006)

Further Information see the 2023 NZ Catholic Bishops Statement
www.catholic.org.nz



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