“I will stand up for the values that have always made America great: faith and family, strength and service, responsibility and opportunity for all.” – John Kerry

Dear friend,

We believe in the sanctity of life, human dignity, pursuing peace and promoting the common good. We are proud to be Catholic, proud to be American and proud to be supporting John Kerry for President.

John Kerry is a man of character, a man of faith and a man with a lifetime of service to his country. John Kerry was confirmed in the Catholic Church, served as an altar boy and even considered entering the priesthood. During Vietnam, he carried his rosary beads as he went into battle and returned safely with his St. Christopher medal in hand. His faith has been a guidepost for him throughout his life, as he said in his convention speech, “I don't wear my own faith on my sleeve. But faith has given me values and hope to live by, from Vietnam to this day, from Sunday to Sunday.”

John Kerry shares our values of protecting human life and dignity, concern for the poor and vulnerable, good stewardship of God’s creation and justice and compassion in our foreign policy. These values are at the heart of our proud Catholic tradition – values for which committed religious and lay Catholics have quietly toiled for over generations.

Yet, despite our rich history, rarely a day goes by without politicians, the media, and even some of our own religious leaders reducing the litmus test for Catholic voters to a single issue. To reduce all Catholic faith in this way is inappropriate, unjust, and contrary to the direct teaching of the Church. The Catholic Bishops in their election year guide, Faithful Citizenship, instruct Catholics to look at a breadth of issues in evaluating candidates:

“Our responsibility is to measure all candidates, policies, parties, and platforms by how they protect or undermine the life, dignity, and rights of the human person, whether they protect the poor and vulnerable and advance the common good.”

As practicing and believing Catholics, we must seek an informed conscience as we approach one of the most important elections of our lifetime. We are personally opposed to abortion, yet we struggle with the most just means to promote and protect human life. In addition we see a host of other issues on which Jesus asks us to act. This faithful reflection is, we believe, more Catholic than the condemnatory statements of a boisterous few. Indeed, Vatican official, Cardinal Joseph
Ratzinger, has stated that a Catholic in good faith can vote for a candidate that supports abortion rights, as long as they are voting for that candidate for other “proportionate reasons.”

When we look at the direction our country is headed, we find a great deal of merit to the reasons Catholics should support national leadership change. Under the Bush administration, our nation has been misled into a disastrous war in Iraq, millions have lost jobs and health coverage and across our land poverty is on the rise.

The Catholic Church continues its proud tradition of leading the call for a more just and peaceful world. John Kerry’s bold leadership on health care, fair wages, human rights, environmental protection, and peacemaking are all proudly rooted in this tradition.

We believe that when Catholics look at the breadth of the issues facing our nation and ask themselves who best shares our values of protecting life, upholding human dignity and promoting the common good, they will join us in supporting John Kerry.

We are proud to be American, proud to be Catholic and proud to be endorsing John Kerry for President. We hope you will join us and vote for John Kerry this November 2nd!

Sincerely,

Former Mayor Dennis W. Archer
Former Congressman David Bonior
Nick Ciaramitaro
Deborah Dingell
Congressman John Dingell
Governor Jennifer M. Granholm
Thomas F. Hinsberg, PhD
Dan Kildee
Janet Lawson
Kathy Lewand
Tom Lewand
Dr. Agnes Mary Mansour
First Gentleman Dan Mulhern
State Representative Bill O'Neil
Charles Rooney
Jean Dietrich Rooney
Barbara G. Stanbridge
Congressman Bart Stupak
Laurie Stupak
Constance A. Soma