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GUEST WRITER

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### COMMENTARY

## I'm a Catholic Nurse. This Is Why Biden Is The Moral Choice For America.

"Catholic social teaching calls us to affirm the dignity of all people with particular concern for the poor and marginalized; stand for the common good; care for our neighbors; and seek social and distributive justice."

BY NANCY SHARTS-HOPKO  
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Servant-leadership is a leadership model wherein the leader prioritizes those whom he or she serves over the status and perks of office. We face a choice in the upcoming election between Joe Biden, [widely recognized as a man who empathically connects](#) with others, [reflecting challenges and sorrows in his own life experience](#), versus Donald Trump [who has called our military troops "suckers" and "losers,"](#) and to date has not expressed sorrow for the [deaths of more than 209,000 Americans from COVID-19](#) on his watch. Those dead include [more than 1,700 nurses and other health professionals](#) who cared for others despite the lack of sufficient, adequate personal protective equipment.

Catholic social teaching calls us to affirm the dignity of all people with particular concern for the poor and marginalized; stand for the common good; care for our neighbors; and seek social and distributive justice. While no political candidate, nor any human being, can perfectly embody all these principles, striking differences between the short, volatile record of our incumbent president versus Biden's long career as a legislator and vice president are clear.

One of these men, Biden, has supported expanded access to health care throughout his career and presided over the US Senate when the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was passed. The other, Trump, championed erosive changes in the ACA which, during his presidency, cost at least 10 million Americans their insurance. Trump pledged to get rid of the ACA (Obamacare) and replace it with a grander plan but [has never articulated what that might be](#). His administration has revoked environmental protections that have direct implications for the nation's health, including one this week that removes restrictions on levels of chemicals in our drinking water that are associated with pediatric cancers.

We have a president whose administration has [separated families](#) and encaged infants and children in squalor at the US-Mexican border. Indeed, he calls immigrants “animals.” This is a president seeking to convince suburban voters that desegregation of US suburbs is a threat to their safety. In contrast, Joe Biden understands that the US is a nation of immigrants and that all Americans seek to secure a life of dignity for their families. He understands that there must be a balance between repairing a damaged planet and creating sustainable jobs for working-class Americans.

Trump proposes turning the clock back to the post-war era when mining and manufacturing boomed, to the detriment of Earth’s ecosystem, and to a time when the rights of women and minorities lagged far behind those of white men. We have seen earlier in this administration an economic boom that left out middle- and lower-income Americans, while the ultra-rich became richer. Trump’s company may have made \$450 million since his election, but we now have evidence that [he failed to pay any meaningful federal income taxes for the past 20 years](#).

Some Catholics believe that Joe Biden’s position supporting women’s right to choose abortion disqualifies him from their consideration as a viable candidate. Pope Francis, however, has clearly reminded us in his 2018 apostolic exhortation, [Gaudete et Exsultate](#), that abortion is not a solitary litmus test. With regard to abortion, he specifically observed that “equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection.”

Considering all this, for me, the question is not how I can support Biden as a Catholic; instead, it is how could I possibly do otherwise?