

MEDIA RELEASE



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ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY RELEASES NSW ELECTION GUIDE

Stark differences have emerged between the major and minor political parties on key issues of concern to Catholic voters ahead of next weekend's NSW State Election.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney sent 13 questions to seven political parties to confirm their position on major social issues including abortion, euthanasia, religious freedom and the seal of confession ahead of voters going to the polls on Saturday 23 March.

Responses were received from the Liberal Party, the Australian Labor Party, the NSW Greens, the Christian Democratic Party, One Nation, Australian Conservatives and Shooters, Fishers and Farmers.

The Archdiocese's Director of Public Affairs and Engagement, Monica Doumit, said some of the parties' positions on crucial policies were "surprising and disappointing".

"Given the next parliament will decide on so many issues that will affect not only Catholics, but the community more broadly, it is important that the parties were asked directly about their voting intentions," said Ms Doumit.

"Only three of the parties gave a commitment to uphold existing religious freedoms in Catholic schools and just two guaranteed to protect human life in any vote on abortion and euthanasia.

"The only issue the parties appear united on is the need to address the housing affordability crisis impacting on so many families in Sydney."

The Greens declared they would use their Upper House numbers to strip funding from faith-based schools, remove Special Religious Education classes from public schools, legalise euthanasia, make abortion free and legal and abolish the Seal of Confession.

This is the first time the Archdiocese has put a range of questions to both major and minor parties to assist Catholic voters. The guide does not advise voters which way to cast their vote at the ballot box.

You can read the guide in full and take part in an online poll on which issues will determine how you vote at: <https://www.catholicweekly.com.au>
The guide is also in this week's print Edition of *The Catholic Weekly*.

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