

Catholics have an obligation to promote the common good – and that includes registering to vote.

Kentucky has made voting, and registering to vote, easier than ever before. Additionally, many who were previously disenfranchised may now register for the first time. The deadline for new registrations (or for updating your existing registration) is October 5.

Kentucky is one of the few remaining states where a felony conviction bars one from voting for the rest of his or her life, absent a restoration of civil rights by the governor. Last December, Governor Andy Beshear signed an executive order automatically restoring voting rights to Kentuckians with convictions for most non-violent felonies, provided they have completed their sentences. There are a few exceptions to this, but it represents a significant opportunity for many who were previously shut out of the political process. To find out if you are eligible under this order, visit civilrightsrestoration.ky.gov.

GoVoteKY.com is the state's portal for new registrations, for updating one's registration information, and for finding information about polling locations and voting absentee, as well as viewing sample ballots for your county.

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Beshear and Secretary of State Michael Adams have agreed to a number of steps to make voting safe and convenient for all Kentuckians. If you are concerned about contracting or spreading the coronavirus, you may request an absentee ballot through the GoVoteKY.com website.

Also, beginning October 13, every county clerk will offer in-person early voting every business day and at least four hours on each Saturday. This is early voting, not absentee voting, so anyone may take advantage of this opportunity, even if they do not have one of the typically required reasons for voting absentee.

Finally, there will be locations to vote on Election Day itself, but the number of polling stations will likely be reduced in most places. Each county will have at least one location where everyone can vote regardless of their home precinct. The GoVoteKY.com website will link to that information as Election Day approaches.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that “[i]t is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person.”¹ In the United States, one of the primary ways we participate is through voting. Let us not neglect this responsibility, but carry it out prayerfully and thoughtfully, as followers of Christ.

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¹ CCC n. 1913