

DON'T GAMBLE AWAY THE GOOD LIFE

WHAT DOES THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACH ABOUT GAMBLING?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches the following about gambling: "Games of chance (card games, etc.) or wagers are not in themselves contrary to justice. They become morally unacceptable when they deprive someone of what is necessary to provide for his needs and those of others. The passion for gambling risks becoming an enslavement" (paragraph 2413).

Traditional Catholic teaching considers several conditions governing the morality of gambling. First, the money or possessions being wagered must belong to the gambler and not needed to support one's family or to fulfill other just obligations (e.g., providing for the poor). Second, those gambling must participate freely and without compulsion. Third, there cannot be fraud in the gambling transaction. Fourth, there must be some level of equality between the parties in the gambling transaction. Fifth, the motive for gambling should be one of pleasure rather than of gain. Sixth, revenues derived from gambling must not be used to support any immoral or illegal activities.

WHAT DO BALLOT INITIATIVES 429, 430, AND 431 PROPOSE?

The 2020 General Election includes three ballot initiatives which, taken together, abolish our state constitution's protection against casinos. The key Initiative, 429, permits any currently operated or future operated licensed racetrack to offer 24/7 casino gambling 365 days/year by holding just one race per year. This Initiative permits "all forms" of gambling, including slot machines, card tables, sports betting, and online gambling hosted through the racetrack. Initiatives 430 and 431 establish regulations, impose taxes on gambling, and provide distributions of gambling revenues.

WILL EXPANDED GAMBLING INCREASE TAX REVENUES FOR NEBRASKA?

Expanded gambling proponents claim that expanded gambling will increase tax revenues by millions of dollars in Nebraska. However, common sense and Catholic social teaching clearly remind us that good public policy is not solely determined by economic growth. Economic growth must be considered alongside other important social and moral factors.

The research is clear: casino gambling creates \$3 in social costs for every \$1 in increased tax revenue. Any alleged short- or long-term economic benefits of gambling are far outweighed by the detrimental social costs expanded gambling would bring to our communities.

WHAT ARE WE GAMBLING WITH?



BROKEN FAMILIES

Studies clearly show negative impacts of gambling on family life. Families with problem gamblers experience increased fraud/deceit, burdensome debt, loss of employment, domestic violence, child neglect/abuse, among other pressing concerns. Online gambling, played on mobile apps, jeopardizes the future of children and teens who are gambling industry targets.



ADDICTION

Casino gambling and gaming devices are inherently structured to exploit the human psyche and produce addiction. Worse yet, the casino industry thrives off addiction and often preys on our poor and middle-class families and the elderly. Casinos extract the majority of their profits from these populations and addicted gamblers.



BANKRUPTCY AND FINANCIAL INSTABILITY

Gambling is all too often advertised as an opportunity to turn "rags to riches" through illusory promises of jackpots. However, these stories are rare. The more typical experience is reliance on payday loans that charge exorbitant interest rates, loss of paychecks and businesses, burdensome debts and loan defaults, and bankruptcy.



CRIME

Research demonstrates that when casino gambling expands every major type of crimes (except murder) increases with it. Creighton University economist, Ernie Goss, estimates just one casino in Omaha "would likely increase the yearly crime rate by 1.5 percent to 7.9 percent." Casinos are also linked with increases in human sex trafficking.



VOTE 'AGAINST' BALLOT INITIATIVES 429, 430, & 431



NEBRASKA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE