NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://www.ncronline.org)

Cardinal Dolan connects vote for Romney with better faith

Joshua J. McElwee | Nov. 20, 2012 NCR Today

New York Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the head of the U.S. bishops? conference, has insinuated that Catholics who voted for Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney are more adherent to their faith than those who voted for President Barack Obama, a Democrat.

Dolan, who is seen by many as the *de facto* leader of the country?s some 77 million Catholics, makes the connection between faith and politics in a Nov. 15 column in his archdiocesan newspaper, *Catholic New York*, titled ?Looking Back at Election Day.?

After reviewing some of the results from elections across the country, Dolan makes a broad remark about what post-election polls say about how Catholics voted for president, making what appears to be an insinuation about Catholics who attend Mass more frequently voting for Romney.

?The polls show that Catholics voted for the president, but that such support was lower than four years ago; and that Catholics who attend Sunday Mass regularly heavily supported his opponent,? Dolan writes [1]. ?These statistics would support a contention that Catholics do indeed let their faith have a say in the politics.?

In the next sentence, the cardinal seems to change tack. ?Of course, through the eyes of faith, neither candidate was perfect, as no political leader ever can be,? he continues.

Dolan?s comments, while not entirely specific, seem significant. The cardinal has been outspoken over the past year, along with several other prelates, about his concern over a mandate from the Department of Health and Human Services requiring coverage of contraceptive services in health care plans.

The cardinal?s remarks also come after a number of bishops this election cycle just about told Catholics in their diocese how to vote, in some cases [2] even equating a vote for Democrats with endangering their eternal salvation.

In his column, Dolan also expresses a number of concerns about the election, including allegations that:

- Democrats have ?gone from wanting to keep abortion ?safe, legal, and rare? to the party that wants abortion at every stage of pregnancy, with no defense at all of the baby in the womb, completely funded by the government;?
- Republicans have ?turned their backs on immigrants, succumbing to the old American curse of nativism;?
- There is a ?growing sentiment in our country that turns John Kennedy?s lofty challenge on its head, as more and more now chant, ?Ask not what I can do for my country, but what my government can do for me.??

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Source URL (retrieved on *2016-05-30 02:08*): http://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/cardinal-dolan-connects-vote-romney-better-faith

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