

## THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTION

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“I have to do my best so that they govern well, and I have to do my best by participating in politics according to my ability. Politics, according to the Social Doctrine of the Church, is one of the highest forms of charity, because it serves the common good. I cannot wash my hands...” **Pope Francis**

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### **You cannot vote unless you are registered as a voter!**

**How do I register?** The Electoral Commission of South Africa will hold a registration weekend on 26 and 27 January, 2019. All voting stations will be open and staff will be there to help you register.

**What do I need to take with me?** Your bar-coded ID book, or new ID smart card, or a valid Temporary Identity Certificate.

**How do I check if I'm already registered?** The easiest way is to check online at the IEC website [www.elections.org.za/content/](http://www.elections.org.za/content/) Otherwise, send an SMS with your ID number to 32810 (R1.00 per SMS); or visit the nearest voting station on the registration weekend.

**What if I can't make it on 26 and 27 January 2019?** You can register at a local IEC office at any time. There are IEC offices all over the country. Look on the IEC website or phone the Electoral Commission at 0800 11 8000 to find out where your nearest office is.

**Can I register if I'm not 18 yet?** Yes, as soon as you have an ID you can register – that is, from the age of 16. It's a good idea to register as soon as you get an ID; then you'll be ready to vote once you turn 18.

*What is the point of registering to vote?  
Elections don't seem to change anything...*

We all feel negative about politics from time to time.

All around us, ordinary South Africans are battling with unemployment, crime, poverty, bad schools, overcrowded hospitals, and an uncertain future. And yes, too many of our politicians seem to be interested only in power, not in serving the people. But we must not stop working for a better country...

*How do we respond?*

One thing is certain: if we turn our back on politics, if we give up our right and our duty to vote, things will certainly not improve. Voting CAN make a difference. It can send the right people and parties to the Provincial Legislatures and to Parliament; it can give good politicians a boost, and it can shock the bad ones into working harder.

Pope Francis reminds us: *“Politics is a noble activity. We should revalue it, practise it with vocation and a dedication that requires testimony, martyrdom – that is, to die for the common good.”*

In the past, many South Africans were prepared to ‘die for the common good’; thankfully, very few are called to do that now. But we are ALL called to do what we can – and what we can all do is to vote. Carefully and prayerfully.

**Make sure you are registered in time to vote!**

For more about registering to vote, and to keep up with the latest information about the elections, visit the IEC website: [www.elections.org.za](http://www.elections.org.za)



*“All of us have a right and a duty to participate in the life of our country. Elections are an important opportunity for us to exercise our God-given dignity and to choose who should govern us for the common good – don’t miss out, make sure that you are registered to vote.” - Bishop Sithembele Sipuka, President of the Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference*

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