

# U.S. bishop: pro-abortion politicians ‘should not’ receive Communion in my diocese

*Martin M. Barillas, Feb 4, 2019 - 3:47 pm EST*

SPOKANE, Washington, February 4, 2019 ([LifeSiteNews](#)) – A Catholic bishop has warned pro-abortion politicians who call themselves “Catholic” and who reside in his diocese that they “should not” present themselves to receive Holy Communion.

“Politicians who reside in the Catholic Diocese of Spokane, and who obstinately persevere in their public support for abortion, should not receive Communion without first being reconciled to Christ and the Church,” wrote Bishop Thomas Daly of Spokane, citing [Canon 915](#) of church law (read full letter below).

In a tweet, the bishop said that “willful murder of unborn children is a grave evil,” and called on Catholics to read his Feb. 1 letter.

Friends, please read my letter on the abortion legislation that has been passed in New York and considered in other states. The willful murder of unborn children is a grave evil. Let us pray for life to be protected from conception until natural death.

<http://ow.ly/VNx30ny1mw>

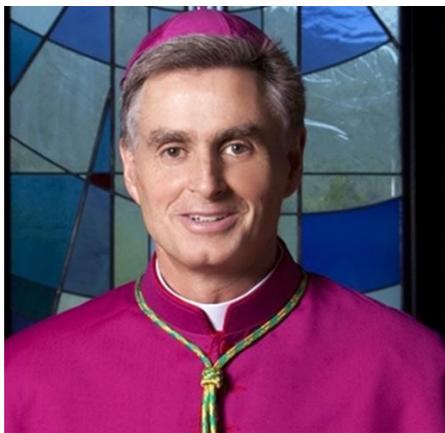
[According to Canon 915 of Church law:](#) Those “who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin, are not to be admitted to holy communion.”

A spokesperson for the Spokane diocese said that Bishop Daly’s letter is not commenting directly on any politician in his diocese, but seeks to clarify that the “Catholic faith and public abortion advocacy are incompatible.” Those who publicly support access to abortion, the spokesperson said, “should refrain from receiving Holy Communion,” [according to CNA](#).

The issue of pro-abortion politicians receiving Communion has been stirred of late ever since New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D), a Catholic, signed one of the most liberal pro-abortion laws in the country on Jan. 21. Various bishops have shown support for excommunication of Cuomo, but Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York has [called](#) such a move “not an appropriate response.”

Bishop Daly mentioned Cuomo in his letter, stating that it is “unacceptable” to call oneself Catholic and champion abortion.

“The champion of this abortion legislation is Andrew Cuomo, a Catholic and governor of New York. Governor Cuomo frequently cites his Catholic faith in support of legislation he favors. His public witness as a Catholic politician, coupled with his stalwart support of abortion, is unacceptable,” the bishop wrote.



Bishop Thomas Daly

“Efforts to expand access to abortion, allowing murder of children up to the moment of birth is evil. Children are a gift from God, no matter the circumstances of their conception. They not only have a right to life, but we as a society have a moral obligation to protect them from harm,” he stated.

Bishop Daly concluded his letter by calling on Christians “to turn to Our Lord in prayer for our political leaders, entrusting them especially to the intercession of St. Thomas More, a

public servant who preferred to die at the hands of civil authorities rather than abandon Christ and the Church.” Finally, he wrote: “Let us also keep the unborn, as well as all pregnant mothers, in our prayers.”

The issue of withholding Communion for pro-abortion Catholic politicians has been contentious in the U.S. church. At a 2004 meeting of U.S. bishops, the now-disgraced ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick [withheld a letter addressed to the bishops by then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger](#) (the future Pope Benedict XVI) on this issue. Titled [“Worthiness to Receive Holy Communion: General Principles](#), the letter provided guidance to the bishops about Catholics in political life.

The future pope wrote that pro-abortion politicians must be admonished not to present themselves for Holy Communion. When “precautionary measures” have been to no avail, and the person continues to present himself to receive the Holy Eucharist, Ratzinger wrote, “the minister of Holy Communion must refuse to distribute it.”