



THE FEAR OF A BLACK BALLOT

The Reality of Voter Suppression

BY NIK MITCHELL, PH.D.

The notion and reality of black political power frightens the racist portion of the American body politic and those who enable it, who in turn actively try to suppress it. The reasoning behind the suppression of the African American vote in the United States has not changed since the practice began after the end of Reconstruction. Black voters meant that black people had a say in what laws were passed and what taxes were levied. More distressing to white supremacists of both the Reconstruction period and today, black voters meant black policymakers and elected officials. During Reconstruction, this fear was made real by the ascendancy of black politicians such as P.B.S. Pinchback (acting Louisiana governor from 1872-73) and the drafting of the Louisiana State Constitution of 1868, largely written by black legislators.

The suppression of the black vote during the Jim Crow period began with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the *Slaughter House Cases* of 1873 which declared that the privileges and immunities of U.S. citizenship guaranteed by the 14th Amendment did not apply to state citizenship. Suppression was made inevitable with the defeat of the Federal Elections Bill of 1890 which would have given

federal courts oversight over state elections. Free from federal interference, many states, especially in the South, stripped black people of their voting rights through a combination of outright denial and extreme voting requirements such as poll taxes and literacy tests.

In 1965, the Voting Rights Act ended the most egregious voter suppression tactics by giving the federal courts oversight over state and local elections. In 2013, however, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the oversight formula used to determine if a district was in violation of the Voting Rights Act was unconstitutional in *Shelby County V. Holder*. To date, no new formula has been created by Congress. Efforts to suppress the black vote, then, have taken a number of forms.

Fewer Polling Places. The presidential election of 2016 was the first national election held after the Shelby County decision. A November report by the Leadership Conference Education Fund examined 381 out of approximately 800 counties that had been monitored under the *Voting Rights Act* before the formula was declared unconstitutional, it found that there were 868 fewer polling places in 2016 than in 2012. While there are

—Continued on page 2



no data for Florida, the report provides the following numbers for the remaining Gulf South states:

Table 1: Polling place closures in Gulf South States after *Shelby County v. Holder* ruling¹

State	Number of closed polling places
Alabama	66
Louisiana	103
Mississippi	44
Texas	403

To have a sense of the scope of these closures, in Louisiana 61 percent of parishes have closed polling places.

Felony Disenfranchisement. In addition to closing polling places, the most pronounced form of voter suppression is disenfranchisement after felony convictions which can be traced back to Jim Crow. *Table 2* shows how each of the Gulf South states restrict voting rights under certain conditions and what percent of the black vote is now suppressed:

Table 2: Gulf Coast State Felony Disenfranchisement and subsequent Black voter suppression²

State	Voters are disenfranchised if they are:	Number and percent of black voters disenfranchised
Alabama	In prison, on parole or probation, or even post-sentence for conviction of a crime of "moral turpitude"	143,924 (15.1%)
Florida	In prison, on parole or probation, & post-sentence	499,306 (21.4%)
Louisiana	In prison, or on parole or probation	68,065 (6.3%) ³
Mississippi	In prison, on parole or probation, & post-sentence	127,130 (15.9%)
Texas	In prison, or on parole or probation	147,727 (6.2%)

The suppression of the African American vote by disenfranchisement has profound impact in the Gulf South, especially because a significant section of the electorate is African American. Mississippi has the highest percentage of African American population, yet over 15 percent of its black population is unable to vote, significantly dampening black political power in that state. In the case of Florida, the suppression of 21 percent of the potential black vote

takes on additional significance in light of Florida's status as a "swing state."

Other Measures. In addition to felony disenfranchisement and closing polling places, states employ other less overt means to suppress African American turnout—including voter identification laws, purging voter rolls, and cutting back on early voting hours. These laws and practices are designed to circumvent the protections provided by the Voting Rights Act. According to the Brennan Center, since the 2012 presidential election, the five Gulf South states have made the following changes:

Table 3: Voting Law Changes in Gulf South States since 2012⁴

State	Restriction since 2012
Alabama	Required photo ID to vote
Florida	Reduced early voting; curbed voter registration drives; and made it harder to restore voting rights to people with past criminal convictions.
Louisiana	No new restrictions. ⁵
Mississippi	Required photo ID to vote.
Texas	Required photo ID if a voter has one, but with an alternative available for those who have a reasonable impediment to obtaining ID; and curbed voter registration drives

Rather than curbing early voting hours, states should be expanding them, creating more polling places to shorten waiting times, and encouraging voter registration. In addition, if states employ photo identification requirements, citizens should be able to attain these forms of identification or alternatives easily and at no cost.

The suppression of voting by any of the means described above contradicts principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, undermines the privileges guaranteed to citizens by the Constitution, and offends basic morality. Those who advocate for policies that limit voter participation reveal that they have no faith in participatory democracy or in the persuasiveness of their own politics and policies. They then resort to what is tantamount to cheating to attain public office.

It is evident from the realities of voter suppression that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is still necessary to protect the vote of millions of Americans—something many black men and women gave their lives to attain. Maximizing voter participation is in the best interest of the entire citizenry because our system of government can only function properly if elected officials have the mandate of people, chosen fairly

—Continued on page 8



Catholic Social Thought and Voting

Current news about voter registration, voter suppression, gerrymandering, criminal justice reform, and foreign intrusion into U.S. elections call us to reflect on what Catholic social thought tells us about voting. As is often the case, considerations about voting begin with human dignity and the common good—the twin foundations of Catholic social thought.

The Second Vatican Council noted that the cultural, economic, and social evolution of peoples into the mid-twentieth century had resulted in profound changes in human institutions and how people related to one another. A key impact was on the political community “especially with regard to universal rights and duties both in the exercise of civil liberty and in the attainment of the common good...”¹ While the Council did not prescribe a universal particular form of government, it made clear that “the political community exists for that common good in which the community finds its full justification and meaning...”²

In spelling out that purpose, the council called for enhanced political participation in these words:

It is in full accord with human nature that juridical political structures should, with ever better success and without any discrimination, afford all their citizens the chance to participate freely and actively in establishing the constitutional bases of a political community, governing the state, determining the scope and purpose of various institutions, and choosing leaders.

A declaration on the right and duty to vote followed in the next sentence:

Hence let all citizens be mindful of their simultaneous right and duty to vote freely in the interest of advancing the common good.³

There is both a *right* and a *duty* to vote which attaches to citizens in a participative political society such that it is “morally obligatory” to exercise the right to vote as an expression of our “co-responsibility for the common good...”⁴

The Council goes on to underscore the universal requirement of a system of laws which protect the

exercise of individual rights and the recognition of those rights and duties by all in society. This duty of government and law is an expression of the first element of the common good, namely, that “public authorities are bound to respect the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person.”⁵ Not only government, but also other citizens, have a reciprocal duty to respect one another’s rights.⁶

When considering questions of voting by persons who are incarcerated or suspension of voting rights after release, policymakers should be very hesitant to restrict the political rights of citizenship:

They cannot be suspended by public authorities without legitimate and proportionate reasons. Political rights are meant to be exercised for the common good of the nation and the human community.⁷

Similarly, insofar as the exercise of the right to vote is essential to the common good of any society, gerrymandering must be judged against the warning of the Council:

Political parties should foster whatever they judge necessary for the common good. But they should never prefer their own advantage over this same common good.⁸

Efforts to dilute the voting power of those of another party for the sake of one’s own party, then, should be subjected to strict moral scrutiny in protecting both individual human dignity and the common good. Even more so, the efforts of one nation to undermine voting and elections within another nation should be condemned most severely.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Second Vatican Council. (1965). *Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, 73.
- ² *Ibid.*, 74.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 75.
- ⁴ Vatican. (1994). *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2240.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 1907.
- ⁶ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. (2005). *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 156.
- ⁷ *Catechism*, 2237.
- ⁸ *Gaudium et Spes*, 75.



JUSTICE COMPLETED

Voting Rights Restoration for Ex-Offenders

BY ALÍ R. BUSTAMANTE, PH.D.

Across the U.S., more than 6.1 million citizens are disenfranchised because of felony convictions.¹ Nearly half of these Americans live in our communities and contribute to society having fully completed sentences, including any term of parole or probation. Yet, these citizens are deprived of the right to vote because of antiquated laws intended to suppress the votes of marginalized communities, especially African Americans.

The Gulf South is home to 45.8 percent of all Americans disenfranchised because of felony convictions—more than a third of whom are African American.² In the Gulf South, African Americans of voting age are more than twice as likely as the general population to experience felony disenfranchisement, 10.8 percent and 5.3 percent respectively (see Table 1).³ Nowhere in America is felony disenfranchisement more common than it is in Florida.

Florida leads the nation in both the total number of citizens disenfranchised because of felony convictions and in the share of the voting-age population that is disenfranchised. For perspective, the nearly 1.7 million Floridians suffering from felony disenfranchisement is greater than the total size of New Mexico's voting-age population of almost 1.6 million.⁴ Between 2010 and 2016 alone, Florida's disenfranchised population increased by almost 150,000.⁵ Today, felony disenfranchisement strips voting rights from more than 1 in 10 Floridians.

Florida is one of four states with a voting ban for all convicted felons.⁶ However, eight additional states, including Alabama and Mississippi, permanently disenfranchise convicted felons for selected offenses. Mississippi's constitution lists 22 disenfranchising crimes, including theft and forgery.⁷

Additionally, where clemency is allowed by law, clemency appeals may be difficult. For example, in Florida, more than 10,000 petitions for voting rights restoration by ex-offenders await review by the state's clemency board—led by Gov. Rick Scott—which approves only eight percent of requests.⁸

As in most states, Florida's law disenfranchising convicted felons was enacted in 1868 in the years following the Civil War. The intent behind felony disenfranchisement laws across the country was to subdue the voting power of newly freed African Americans after the passage of the Reconstruction Amendments.⁹ Research shows that states with larger black populations were more likely to impose stringent felony disenfranchisement laws.¹⁰ It is important to note that, according to Catholic social teaching, laws that disenfranchise are immoral and undermine the common good.

First, disenfranchisement laws are immoral because they restrict the capacity of individuals to actively participate in a key aspect of social life. The U.S. Bishops state that, "In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation."¹¹ Furthermore, Catholic social teaching asserts that political participation is an essential way that we exercise our responsibility for co-creating the world entrusted to us by God, which enhances human freedom.^{12,13} As a result, a ban on voting rights for convicted felons excludes ex-offenders from political life and from full membership in society.

Second, the common good is undermined by both "criminal behavior that threatens the lives and dignity of others and by policies that seem to give up on those who have broken the law."¹⁴ Disenfranchisement is punitive and serves no rehabilitative purpose. Convicted felons are forced to serve

Table 1: Estimates of Disenfranchised Individuals with Felony Convictions in U.S. and Gulf South States: 2016

State	Total Disenfranchised		Share of Voting-age Population Disenfranchised (%)	
	All	African American	All	African American
Alabama	286,266	143,924	7.6%	15.1%
Florida	1,686,318	499,306	10.4%	21.4%
Louisiana	108,035	68,065	3.0%	6.3%
Mississippi	218,181	127,130	9.6%	15.9%
Texas	495,928	147,727	2.5%	6.2%
Gulf South Total	2,794,728	986,152	5.3%	10.8%
U.S. Total	6,106,327	2,228,118	2.5%	7.4%

Source: Sentencing Project. (2016). *6 Million Lost Voters: State-Level Estimates of Felony Disenfranchisement, 2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/6-Million-Lost-Voters.pdf>

Note: The disenfranchised population includes individuals with felony convictions that have completed their sentences as well as those on parole, felony probation, and in prison or jail. According to data from the Sentencing Project, the disenfranchised population with completed sentences represents between 76 and 88 percent of all felony disenfranchised persons in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi.

a second, life-long sentence that stigmatizes and debilitates. In effect, disenfranchisement laws designate ex-offenders as “lost-causes” that do not deserve full participation in the social and political world. Instead, we must insist upon a vision of a common good that gives primacy to human dignity for all people and in all places. The dignity and rights of ex-offenders must be respected and retained as they are first and foremost people made in the image and likeness of God.

Felony disenfranchisement laws, however, might be on the decline thanks to people of good will.

In 2017, Alabama legislators reformed the state’s felony disenfranchisement law to better define disenfranchisement crimes. Prior to 2017, the state of Alabama applied an inconsistent standard of disenfranchising convicted felons who committed a “felony involving moral turpitude.”¹⁵ Many low-level offenders lost their right to vote in this process. Nevertheless, the recent Definition of Moral Turpitude Act is only a subtle improvement. Alabama law still lists 50 crimes that automatically lead to disenfranchisement. States across the country should expand on Alabama’s example and move to repeal all disenfranchisement laws, because they violate the voting rights of ex-offenders.

Courts are now moving in this direction. On February 1, 2018, a federal district court judge in Tallahassee, FL ruled that the “unfettered discretion that the [Florida] Clemency Board possesses” violates both the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution.¹⁶ In particular, the court acknowledged the arbitrary and unconstitutional nature of state disenfranchisement laws.

Additionally, the diligent and compassionate efforts of organizations such as the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

and Floridians for a Fair Democracy have succeeded in securing more than one million signatures in support of a ballot amendment that restores voting rights for ex-offenders. On November 6, 2018, Floridians will decide whether to pass the Voting Restoration Amendment to the Florida Constitution, which restores the voting rights of nearly 1.5 million Floridians with felony convictions and completed sentences. Still, at least 60 percent of voters must support the Voting Restoration Amendment in the November election in order for it to take effect. Additionally, the Voting Restoration Amendment does not extend voting rights to ex-offenders on parole or probation, a total of 91,000 individuals.¹⁷ Therefore, more efforts need to be taken to secure the rights and human dignity of all Floridians.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Sentencing Project. (2016). *Felony disenfranchisement: A primer*. Retrieved from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/felony-disenfranchisement-a-primer/>
- 2 Sentencing Project. (2016). *6 million lost voters: State-level estimates of felony disenfranchisement, 2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/6-million-lost-voters-state-level-estimates-felony-disenfranchisement-2016/>
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Brennan Center for Justice. (2018). *Voting rights restoration efforts in Florida*. Retrieved from <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/voting-rights-restoration-efforts-florida>
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Sentencing Project. (2016). *Felony disenfranchisement: A primer*.
- 8 New York Times. (Jan. 2, 2018). Florida’s 1.5 million voters. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/02/opinion/florida-missing-voters.html>
- 9 Brennan Center for Justice. (2017.) *Racism & felony disenfranchisement: An intertwined history*. Retrieved from <https://www.brennancenter.org/publication/racism-felony-disenfranchisement-intertwined-history>
- 10 Behrens, A., Uggen, C., & Manza, J. (2003). ‘Ballot manipulation and the “menace of Negro domination”’: Racial threat and felon disenfranchisement in the United States, 1850–2002’. *American Journal of Sociology* 109(3):559–605.

—Continued on page 8



IMMIGRANTS AND CRIME: Debunking the Myth

BY SUE WEISHAR, PH.D.

In his first State of Union address, President Trump repeatedly linked immigration with gang violence, murder, and terrorism. This, of course, was not surprising from someone who has made demonizing and deporting undocumented immigrants and gutting legal immigration a major focus of his Administration. Notably missing from his speech were any facts supporting the notion that immigrants are more likely to commit crimes than native-born Americans. There is good reason for this: over a century's worth of social science research has consistently found that immigrants are no more likely to engage in criminal activity than persons born in the U.S.

One of the earliest studies on immigration was conducted by the Industrial Commission, a body appointed by President William McKinley to investigate questions pertaining to immigration, business, and labor. In 1901, the commission issued a special report that found that "foreign-born whites were less criminal than native whites."¹ Although the United States Immigration Commission, formed by Congress in 1907 to study the impact of recent immigration to the United States, concluded that immigration from southern and eastern Europe posed a serious threat to American culture and society, it nevertheless found that "no satisfactory evidence has yet been produced to show that immigration has resulted in an increase in crime disproportionate to the increase in the adult population" and that the presence of recent immigrants may have even suppressed criminal activity.² The Wickersham Commission (1929-1931) documented widespread evasion

of Prohibition and its negative effect on American society. In the course of its investigations into law enforcement practices, the commission noted a "strong likelihood" that immigrants "can definitely be exonerated from the charge that they are responsible for a disproportionate share of the crimes current in this country."³

Evidence documenting the lack of connection between immigration and crime has only grown in recent years. In 2017, criminologists Graham Ousey and Charis Kubrin concluded an exhaustive analysis of two decades worth of studies (1994-2014) on the relationship between crime and immigration to "geospatial" units such as city blocks, census tracts, counties, or metropolitan areas. A meta-analysis of the 51 studies they examined found almost no relationship between immigration and crime. However, when they compared point-in-time studies to longitudinal studies within their sample, the researchers found that longitudinal studies revealed a significantly larger and more negative relationship between immigration and crime, i.e. *increased immigration was associated with a decrease in crime*. Ousey and Kubrin believe this finding is particularly noteworthy as longitudinal studies tend to carry more weight in scientific research because they offer a greater ability to control for confounding variables.⁴

Another way to measure the relationship between crime and immigration is to look at the number of immigrants serving time in jails or prisons. This is complicated by the fact

that several states do not report the immigration status of persons they incarcerate. However, the U.S. Census counts the nativity and naturalization status of incarcerated persons in its annual American Community Survey (ACS). Using 2014 ACS data, the libertarian Cato Institute employed statistical methods to identify undocumented immigrant prisoners by excluding incarcerated, non-U.S. citizen respondents with characteristics that undocumented immigrants are unlikely to have, such as a household without children receiving Food Stamps.⁵ They estimated the incarceration rate for native born Americans at 1.53 percent compared to 0.47 percent for legal immigrants and 0.85 percent for undocumented immigrants. When those incarcerated solely for immigration violations were not included, the incarceration rate for undocumented immigrants fell to 0.5 percent.⁶

Nativist politicians scapegoat immigrants and inflate immigrant criminality to manipulate public fears and create support for harsh, anti-immigrant policies. But why do people continue to believe such distortions, despite the preponderance of evidence that such fears are misguided?

Some might argue that the human brain is “hard-wired” to fear outsiders—that in pre-historic times, this kept humans safe. Additionally, because our brains are also built to be vigilant, we are constantly on the lookout for new threats. Such fears are then compounded by the way our minds have evolved to think in mental shortcuts (heuristics), making anecdotes about the threatening actions of outsiders even more potent. By focusing on one aspect of a complex problem (e.g. crimes committed by immigrants) and ignoring others (e.g. probability, randomness) humans form “cognitive biases” that lead to faulty decision-making processes.⁷ The constant barrage of disparaging comments about immigrants by the president also serves to reinforce a mental frame that immigrants are different and dangerous.

How can one respond to the fearmongering about immigrants and challenge the harsh policies that such scapegoating makes possible? I suggest through the lens of mature religious faith.

A core teaching of all the great faith traditions at their most evolved or mature level is the unity of creation and the equality of humankind. Such an understanding of the universe has come to be seen as essential for the survival of human society and the environment. Without this kind of consciousness, humans seem inevitably to resort to primitive tendencies that result in tribalism, endless war, and the degradation of the earth’s resources.

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM, writes that mature religion serves as a “conveyor belt for the evolution of human consciousness” towards love, non-violence, justice, inclusivity, and the

universality of such a message, in contrast to immature religion which stalls people at the early stages of tribal consciousness where they are convinced that only they are worthy. Mature religion creates willing people who unfold in response to love and grace and freedom; immature religion creates willful people who react to the illusions of others.⁸

Fr. Rohr suggests that if we would just imitate Jesus in very practical ways then the Christian religion would be “made to order” to grease the wheels of human consciousness towards love and inclusivity.⁹ Since its central figure was himself a refugee who fled Herod’s persecution and eventually became an itinerant preacher, perhaps it is not surprising that mature Christianity, rooted in the Hebraic tradition, has so much wisdom to guide the treatment of immigrants. The moral imperative to treat strangers with hospitality is repeated more times in the Old Testament than any other except the commandment to worship one God.¹⁰ And just so we would not miss the point, Jesus repeats four times in the Last Judgement (Matt 25:31-46) that compassion towards others, including “the stranger,” is essential to our salvation.

Christianity’s core teachings could not be more clear on the imperative to welcome and love the stranger. This then begs the question—when will Christians “grow up” and start taking our faith seriously?

ENDNOTES

- ¹ The report did not even bother to distinguish between foreign born people of color and U.S. born people of color.
- ² Martinez, R. & Lee, M. (2000) On immigration and crime. *The Nature of Crime: Continuity and Change*, edited by Gary LaFree, vol. 1 of *Criminal Justice 2000*, 485-524. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice.
- ³ Kane, F.F. (Winter, 1931) Challenge of the Wickersham Deportations Report. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 23 (4), p. 576.
- ⁴ Ousey, G. & Kubrin, C. (2018) Immigration and crime: Assessing a contentious issue. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 1, 63-84.
- ⁵ Almost six million U.S. citizen children under the age of 18 live with a parent or family member who is undocumented. As U.S. citizens, these children are eligible for Food Stamps (SNAP). See <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/us-citizen-children-impacted-immigration-enforcement>
- ⁶ Landgrave, M. & Nowrasteh, A. (March 15, 2017). Criminal immigrants: Their numbers, demographics, and countries of origin, at <https://www.cato.org/publications/immigration-reform-bulletin/criminal-immigrants-their-numbers-demographics-countries#full>
- ⁷ Resnick, B. (January 30, 2017) Seven lessons from psychology that explain the irrational fear of outsiders, at <https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2017/1/28/14425658/fear-of-refugees-explained>
- ⁸ Rohr, R. (July 27, 2017) Deepening connection: Salvation as at-one-ment at <https://cac.org/deepening-connection-2017-07-27/>
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ See Heyer, K. (2013). Legalization and the undocumented according to Catholic Social Teaching. In *On Strangers No Longer: Perspectives on the Historic U.S.-Mexican Catholic Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on Migration*. Edited by Todd Scribner and J. Kevin Appleby, Paulist Press, New Jersey, pp. 87-106.

6363 St. Charles Avenue, Box 94
New Orleans, LA 70118-6143

(504) 864-7746
jsri@loyno.edu
www.loyno.edu/jsri

Connect with us!



THE FEAR OF A BLACK BALLOT

—Continued from page 2

and openly. Truly representative government must enable its citizens all to vote; otherwise, we face a return to a Jim Crow style patrician rule where the suppressed population are seen as merely a problem to be controlled rather than participants in a democratic society.

ENDNOTES *The Fear of a Black Ballot*

- ¹ The Leadership Conference Education Fund, 2016, "The Great Poll Closure" retrieved from <http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/reports/2016/poll-closure-report-web.pdf>
- ² Data retrieved from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/the-facts/#map?dataset-option=SIR>, The Sentencing Project, 2016, "6 Million Lost Voters: State-Level Estimates of Felony Disenfranchisement, 2016" Retrieved from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/6-million-lost-voters-state-level-estimates-felony-disenfranchisement-2016/>
- ³ 2018 legislation in Louisiana restores the right to register to vote for most felons on probation or parole five years after their release from prison.
- ⁴ Data Retrieved from <https://www.brennancenter.org/new-voting-restrictions-america>
- ⁵ Louisiana adopted a photo ID requirement for voting in 1997, including drivers' licenses, passports, military ID, and Louisiana identification card; but allows a voter without photo ID to sign an affidavit to be able to vote.

JUSTICE COMPLETED

—Continued from page 5

ENDNOTES *Justice Completed*

- ¹¹ U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2015). *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility*, 13.
- ¹² Pope Benedict XVI. (2005). *Deus Caritas Est: God Is Love*, 28.
- ¹³ Second Vatican Council. (1965). *Gaudium et Spes: The Church in the Modern World*, 31.
- ¹⁴ U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2000). *Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Punishment*, p. 1.
- ¹⁵ Sentencing Project. (2018). *Felony Disenfranchisement in Mississippi*. Retrieved from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Felony-Disenfranchisement-in-Mississippi.pdf>
- ¹⁶ Brennan Center for Justice. (2018). *Voting Rights Restoration Efforts in Florida*.
- ¹⁷ Hand et al., v. Scott et al., 4:17-cv-00128-MW-CAS (11th Cir. 2017).

JustSouth Quarterly one-page articles are available free at loyno.edu/jsri/publications

JustSouth is published quarterly by the Jesuit Social Research Institute, College of Arts and Sciences, Loyola University New Orleans, 6363 St. Charles Avenue, Box 94, New Orleans, LA 70118

The *JustSouth Monthly* is published 12 times a year and is available upon request without charge at jsri@loyno.edu. Copyright 2014 © Jesuit Social Research Institute. ISSN 2161-315X

THE MISSION OF THE JESUIT SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Jesuit Social Research Institute works to transform the Gulf South through action research, analysis, education, and advocacy on the core issues of poverty, race, and migration. The Institute is a collaboration of Loyola University New Orleans and the Society of Jesus rooted in the faith that does justice.



JESUITS
USA Central and
Southern Province