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# Catholic Courier

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK ■ SEPTEMBER 2004 ■ www.catholiccourier.com ■ \$3.00 NEWSSTAND ■ 40 PAGES/2 SECTIONS

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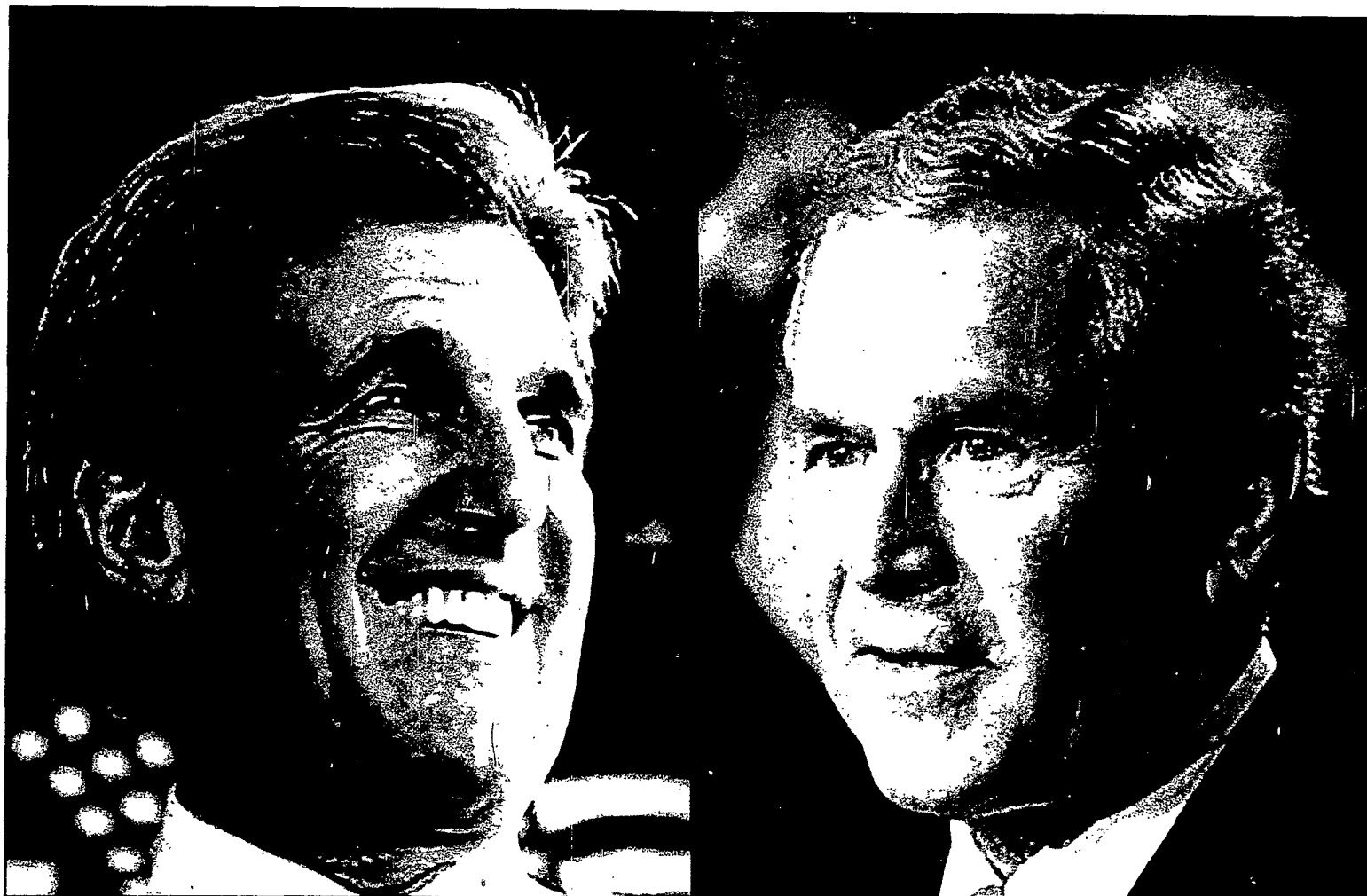


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## Bishops offer election guidance

### Provide document as aid to parties' platform panels

WASHINGTON — The U.S. bishops offered guidance to the committees drafting election-year platforms for the Democratic and Republican parties in the form of their 2003 document, "Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility."

The document, approved by the Administrative Committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, "summarizes the Catholic Church's teaching on public policy issues that have important moral and ethical dimensions," USCCB

General Secretary Msgr. William P. Fay wrote in nearly identical letters to party leaders.

The letters were addressed to Bill Harris, convention chairman and CEO for the Republican National Committee, and Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., who chairs the platform drafting committee for the Democratic National Committee.

Msgr. Fay said the church teachings summarized in "Faithful Citizenship" are "rooted in a commitment to defend the life and dignity of every human being and to further the common good."

"We believe they can inform the choices of all people who share our commitment to justice and peace in our nation

and world," he added. "We ask that you review the statement, including the final section which focuses on specific issues, and take these ideas into consideration as you carry out your work."

The 8,500-word document, designed to offer a blueprint for electoral decisions based on Catholic social teaching, calls on American Catholics to "participate now and in the future in the debates and choices over the values, vision and leaders that will guide our nation."

A similar document has been issued before every presidential election for the last 28 years.

In his letter, Msgr. Fay said "hundreds  
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Story and photos by Catholic News Service