2026 CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE · SOUTH DAKOTA · LETTERS FROM LEO

U.S. House, At-Large

Open seat (Dusty Johnson ran for governor). Independent Jack Pittman withdrew.



Nicole Gronli

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

Small business owner from Dell Rapids; led USDA Rural Development in South Dakota from 2022 to 2025.



Marty Jackley

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

South Dakota attorney general (2009–2019 and since 2023); former U.S. attorney for South Dakota.

Where the candidates stand on the issues Pope Leo XIV has raised, in their own words and votes. Bracketed numbers link to sources. We do not rate, score, or endorse candidates.

WAR & PEACE

POPE LEO XIV *Leo invited citizens of every country involved in the war with Iran to contact their leaders and members of Congress "to work for peace and to reject war and violence."* Remarks at Castel Gandolfo, Apr. 7, 2026 (Vatican News via The Good Newsroom)

NICOLE GRONLI

No public position found.

MARTY JACKLEY

No public position found.

AI & THE DIGNITY OF WORK

POPE LEO XIV *"No one can be reduced to productivity, to cognitive performance, or to mere data."* Magnifica Humanitas presentation, May 25, 2026

NICOLE GRONLI

Opposes federal tax breaks for data centers, saying companies, not taxpayers, should pay for their infrastructure, energy and water; supports apprenticeships and policies "that help wages grow."

[1] Nikki G for SD: Priorities

MARTY JACKLEY

No public position found.

THE POOR & THE SAFETY NET

POPE LEO XIV *The preferential choice for the poor is "a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society."* Dilexi Te, Oct. 4, 2025

NICOLE GRONLI

Pledges to protect Medicare and Medicaid, restore Marketplace tax credits and make the Rural Health Transformation Fund permanent; supports paid family and medical leave and direct food assistance programs.

[1] Nikki G for SD: Priorities

MARTY JACKLEY

No public position found.

ELECTIONS & CIVIC LIFE

POPE LEO XIV *Authentic democracy, "far from being a mere procedure," "recognizes the dignity of every person and calls each citizen to participate responsibly in the pursuit of the common good."* Message to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Apr. 9, 2026

NICOLE GRONLI

Supports accommodations for voters with disabilities in "in-person and mail-in voting" and pledges to respect "citizens' right to protest peacefully."

[1] Nikki G for SD: Priorities

MARTY JACKLEY

No public position found.

LIFE OF THE UNBORN

POPE LEO XIV *Abortion "cuts short a growing life and refuses to welcome the gift of life."* Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 9, 2026

NICOLE GRONLI

Says "without bodily autonomy, your right to keep the Government out of the doctor's office becomes null & void"; backs contraception access and expanded prenatal, postpartum and maternity care.

[1] Nikki G for SD: Priorities

MARTY JACKLEY

His campaign lists an endorsement from South Dakota Right to Life under "Pro-Life"; his issues page does not state a specific abortion position.

[1] Marty Jackley for Congress

THE DEATH PENALTY

POPE LEO XIV *Someone who opposes abortion but favors the death penalty "is not really pro-life."* AP via PBS NewsHour, Sept. 30, 2025

NICOLE GRONLI

No public position found.

MARTY JACKLEY

No public position found.

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

POPE LEO XIV *"Defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

NICOLE GRONLI

No public position found.

MARTY JACKLEY

Links fentanyl and meth trafficking to "an open border" and says, "Secure the border, finish the wall, and let law enforcement do its job."

[1] Marty Jackley for Congress: Issues

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & EDUCATION

POPE LEO XIV *Religious freedom is "the right of every person to worship according to conscience."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

NICOLE GRONLI

Opposes closing the U.S. Department of Education and pledges to protect Title I and fully fund IDEA; no stated position on vouchers or religious liberty.

[1] Nikki G for SD: Priorities

MARTY JACKLEY

No public position found.

CARE FOR CREATION

POPE LEO XIV *"We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures."* AP, Oct. 1, 2025

NICOLE GRONLI

Supports year-round E15, higher ethanol blends and biofuel investment; backs holding agricultural chemical makers accountable when products cause harm.

[1] Nikki G for SD: Priorities

MARTY JACKLEY

No public position found.

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