

# VOTE NO MEASURE 27

Keep South Dakota healthy and drug-free

Initiated Measure 27 will appear before voters in the Nov. 8, 2022 election. It proposes to legalize the possession, use, and distribution of marijuana for so-called “recreational” purposes. South Dakota’s Catholic bishops urge a “NO” vote on Measure 27, due to the harms marijuana causes to persons who use it and the damage it inflicts on society.

## How does marijuana harm persons who use it?

Marijuana contains a mind-altering chemical known as delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol or “THC” for short. Marijuana used today has three times the concentration of THC compared to 25 years ago.<sup>1</sup>

Adverse mental health effects of using marijuana include impaired memory, difficulty with thinking and problem-solving, hallucinations, delusions, and psychosis.<sup>2</sup>

Marijuana negatively affects brain development, especially

among younger people. It impairs learning, results in the loss of IQ points, and increases the risk of addiction.<sup>3</sup>

Using marijuana has been associated with worse educational outcomes, lower income, welfare dependence, and unemployment.<sup>4</sup>

In Colorado, an early state to legalize marijuana, the percentage of suicides in which toxicology reports showed the presence of marijuana has doubled since legalization.<sup>5</sup>

## How does marijuana use harm society?

Marijuana use leads to more dangerous roads. It is the illicit drug most frequently found in the blood of drivers who have been involved in vehicle crashes.<sup>6</sup>

In Colorado, traffic deaths connected to marijuana use have doubled following legalization. One in every five traffic deaths now involve a driver who has tested positive for marijuana.<sup>7</sup>

The South Dakota State Medical Association has stated, “Societal costs of marijuana use include paying for increased emergency room visits, medical care, and addiction treatment for the uninsured; ... increased crime; and a negative impact on the health of those exposed to secondhand smoke.”<sup>8</sup>

Learn more about marijuana and Measure 27 by visiting: [sdcatholicconference.org/no-on-27](https://sdcatholicconference.org/no-on-27)



1 Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA). <https://www.samhsa.gov/marijuana>

2 National Institute on Drug Abuse. <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/cannabis-marijuana>

3 Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation. <https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org/articles/teen-marijuana-use>

4 “Cannabis use and later life outcomes.” <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18482420/>

5 Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area [https://www.rmhidta.org/\\_files/ugd/4a67c3\\_b391ac360f974a8bbf868d2e3e25df3d.pdf](https://www.rmhidta.org/_files/ugd/4a67c3_b391ac360f974a8bbf868d2e3e25df3d.pdf)

6 National Institute on Drug Abuse. <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/does-marijuana-use-affect-driving>

7 Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area. [https://www.rmhidta.org/\\_files/ugd/4a67c3\\_b391ac360f974a8bbf868d2e3e25df3d.pdf](https://www.rmhidta.org/_files/ugd/4a67c3_b391ac360f974a8bbf868d2e3e25df3d.pdf)

8 SDSMA Statement, Amendment A. <https://sdsos.gov/elections-voting/assets/2020BQPamphletColorVersion.pdf>

# What does the Catholic Church teach about drug use?

“The use of drugs inflicts very grave damage on human health and life. Their use, except on strictly therapeutic grounds, is a grave offense.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church  
(2291)



“It is the responsibility of the Church to educate consciences, to teach moral responsibility and to unmask the evil, to unmask this idolatry of money that enslaves man, to unmask the false promises, the lies, the fraud that is behind drugs.”

Pope Benedict XVI

“Some are of the opinion that the production and sale of certain drugs should be legalized... Consequently, in school the use of certain drugs is becoming common; this is encouraged by talk that tries to minimize the dangers, especially by distinguishing between soft and hard drugs... This distinction disregards and downplays the risks inherent in taking any toxic product, especially behavioral dependency..., the blurring of conscience and the loss of one’s will and freedom...”

Pope St. John Paul II



“Drug addiction is an evil, and with evil there can be no yielding or compromise... Attempts, however limited, to legalize so-called ‘recreational drugs’, are not only highly questionable from a legislative standpoint, but they fail to produce the desired effects.”

Pope Francis

## How can I help stop marijuana legalization?

Join the coalition that has formed to oppose Measure 27 – Protecting South Dakota Kids. Visit the website to make a donation, sign up for updates, and volunteer:

[www.protectingsdkids.com](http://www.protectingsdkids.com)



South Dakota Catholic Conference | [sdcatholicconference.org](http://sdcatholicconference.org)