

# **Immigration: The importance of both charity and justice**

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My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As I have watched the situation unfold with Catholic Charities and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I feel I must speak out as a shepherd in concern for the flock. Our new Vice President, Vice President J.D. Vance, stated that he was heartbroken over the response of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops regarding immigration and this Administration's policies. As many of the American bishops have attacked this new administration which has so far made immense strides in protecting life, I am also heartbroken at the bishops' response.

As I am sure you have all seen, President Trump took steps to freeze the funds of grant, loan, and federal financial assistance programs which run contrary to the Administration's Executive Orders in certain areas such as the elimination of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, as well as ensuring the US immigration infrastructure was facilitating lawful and legal immigration. This funding freeze included funding for many organizations including Catholic Charities. Regarding Catholic Charities specifically, we are not talking about a small amount of money that has been received by this organization and these bishops. Today, about two thirds of Catholic Charities' annual spending comes from government sources, which totals more than half a billion dollars of federal grants alone. Spokespersons for the organization as well as various bishops are protesting this freeze, stating that Catholic Charities does good work and performs many works of charity. However, the fact is that it has been known for some time that Catholic Charities is involved in funding immoral and even potentially illegal activities as far as the immigration laws of this country are concerned, and that in fact their activities have in many cases hurt rather than helped vulnerable populations.

Many might ask, though, does not the Church teach that we should help those who are less fortunate? And many might point to Scripture, “And the king answering shall say to them: Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:40). However, behind this mask that many of the bishops wear that seems to broadcast caring for the “least brethren” are the true issues that motivate them that they do not want you to see.

The Church has always taught and advocated for the sanctity and dignity of every human life and has always advocated for compassion in the treatment of migrants and refugees. However, Catholic doctrine also emphasizes the importance of both charity and justice, with respect always for just laws. One of the greatest concerns about these funds having been used for illegal immigration resettlement activities is that not only has this served to bring many criminals into our country who have the potential to harm citizens, but in many cases these activities have served to place very vulnerable people, especially a great number of children, at risk to be abused and exploited. As we learn more about this situation with the bishops and Catholic Charities, it is becoming evident that in many cases children have not been adequately safeguarded from potential exploitation including human trafficking. In fact, many bishops—and in some cases the very bishops who are protesting the freezing of funds—have had a very poor record of safeguarding children in recent times. And as much as it fills with me dismay to have to say this, there is good reason to suspect that some of the American bishops have contributed to, rather than safeguarded against, the exploitation of these children who have been brought into our country illegally.



Something else that can easily be overlooked is that all of this is happening in an atmosphere in the Church which, in the name of social justice, has brought in the Marxist and non-Catholic

movement of Liberation Theology. I like Dr. Taylor Marshall's definition of liberation theology – he called it “Marxism with a blanket of Catholicism over it” and that is an apt description. Liberation Theology has been pushed forward in the Church in great measure by the Order of the Society of Jesus (also known as the Jesuits). I will remind you also that Pope Francis is a Jesuit, and he has many friends and professional contacts who are open supporters of Liberation Theology. This theology focuses on class struggle and reforming unjust earthly systems, and a key tenet of that is the redistribution of wealth. Sadly, this branch of theology has also been used by many of its proponents even to justify violence. This pernicious theology is now firmly entrenched within the Church, including within the current Vatican hierarchy. In this climate, Catholic doctrine falls by the wayside, and instead a religion that worships man is heralded. Instead of proclaiming Jesus Christ as King, the current Vatican mindset seems to be that man is king, as we see reflected in the Vatican's push for the so-called “Synodal” church where instead of trying to hear God's voice, we are encouraged to listen to one another and devise man-made solutions to all the world's problems.

How this figures into the situation with Catholic Charities and the American bishops is that many in the current climate in the Church would argue that bringing poor immigrants into the country and allowing them access to services funded by American taxpayers is a just way to “redistribute the wealth.” However, although social justice is indeed an integral part of Catholic doctrine, the Church's social doctrine is rooted in Scripture, and does not mean what many in the Church have redefined it to mean, which is in fact socialism. The term social justice has in essence been hijacked. I would encourage you to read an article by Deacon Keith Fournier entitled: “[Social Justice: Take Back the Term from the Thieves and Build a New Catholic Action](#)” (October 4, 2010) if you want to understand this subject better.

The truth is that having a secure border and an orderly and lawful immigration process is indeed the most compassionate approach for migrants, and it helps to safeguard against the chaos and mass suffering that is happening at our borders now. However, it is a fact that bringing illegal foreign nationals to the country and the attempts to resettle them while sidestepping immigration law has brought great sums of money into the hands of these many bishops who now protest so loudly, and who are in reality present-day Judases who stand with outstretched hands for the thirty pieces of silver.

We find also as more and more of this situation comes to light that in many cases the money received has been routed to organizations that are pro-abortion, anti-family, and indeed, anti-Catholic. And now, when our recently elected President steps in to stop these illegal activities, many bishops verbally attack him, and yet these same bishops spoke not a word against President Biden, who claimed to be Catholic, as he supported abortion and gender ideology, both opposed to Catholic teaching. What is especially telling is the finding that the USCCB used 90% of the collected federal funds for immigration resettlement, and less than 1% for pro-life activities. Although claiming that abortion is their preeminent priority, the USCCB has never collected money for pro-life activities. For example, we find that one Texas bishop funneled millions of dollars into organizations and activities to incentivize illegal immigration while actively working to squelch pro-life activities in his diocese.



It is a fact that most migrants who come to the United States illegally do not have a right to be in this country and are not in reality fleeing persecution. At least 80 percent would not qualify for asylum or refugee status. Preventing migrants from coming here illegally is not a rejection of any migrant's humanity, but instead it is a matter of justice and prudence in supporting the rule of law and the proper order of immigration. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that "political authorities, for the sake of the common good for which they are responsible, may make the exercise of the right to immigrate subject to various juridical conditions." (CCC #2241). Therefore, Catholic doctrine teaches that not only can a nation justly enforce its borders, but it can impose consequences on those who break its laws. Therefore, regarding the millions of illegal aliens who have come into the U.S, for the government to send them home is a perfectly

acceptable method of enforcing the law, as long as it is done humanely. We can recognize though that returning migrants to countries where they would be unjustly subjected to persecution is of course not in keeping with Catholic doctrine. However, in the current situation, where human trafficking is estimated to be a billion-dollar industry, and drugs such as fentanyl are flooding into American communities, illegal immigration is without a doubt causing more human suffering than the alternative which is secure borders and strong protection against illegal immigration. The current situation in which Catholic Charities is involved regarding illegal immigration is most assuredly not compassionate.

In summary, I want to emphasize that the Church has always taught the sanctity and dignity of every human being and has always advocated for compassion in the treatment of migrants and refugees, but the Church has also always taught that nations have the right to regulate immigration in a just and humane manner. Catholic doctrine emphasizes the importance of both charity and justice, with respect always for just laws. And I want to also emphasize that the Church does not promote illegal activities but instead calls for just immigration policies and legal pathways for those seeking a better life.

By aiding and abetting illegal immigration activities and failing to protect vulnerable migrants, Catholic Charities, the USCCB and, by and large, a great number of the American bishops, have been directly or indirectly complicit in harming rather than helping many of the most vulnerable human beings, including a great number of migrant children. I would urge the faithful to contact their bishop and to speak out about the role of Catholic Charities in their diocese.

Yours In Christ,

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Bishop Emeritus