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Free to Serve USCCB Religious Liberty News *"We are Catholics, We are Americans"*

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New and Notable

Archbishop Lori's Address on "The Demands of Faith"

USCCB Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty Chairman Archbishop William Lori gave a talk at a symposium at Yale Law School entitled "Faith, Sexuality, and the Meaning of Freedom". Archbishop Lori's talk discussed "The Demands of Faith". Here is an excerpt:

At the moment we are focusing on one aspect of that discussion, namely, the "demands" of faith in a dynamic cultural setting. A clarification of the word "demands" might be in order. I would suggest it can mean three things: First, it refers to conditions under which people of faith and their ministries flourish so as to accomplish what they see as their God-given mission, a mission that often includes proclamation, worship, education, charity, and advocacy. Second, it means the legitimate expectation of people of faith that they and their religious institutions will be fully accorded the protection of their God-given religious freedom guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. At the very least this signals freedom from government coercion but I would say it also includes a certain encouragement for religious people to pursue the truth, grow in virtue, and make their contribution to human dignity and the common good. Third, the word "demand" does not imply a need or desire on the religious side to compromise the rights of others in fulfilling a religious mission; nor does it imply a right on the part of religious people and their institutions to endanger the common good of society. Rather, there is need to ensure that in our society there is ample "room" for people of faith, for their institutions, and for religious ideas. [Read more.](#)

President and Vice President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Stand in Defense of All Faiths In Response to Executive Order on Refugees
Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, vice president of the USCCB, have issued a joint statement regarding the recent executive order on the new refugee policy announced by President Trump this past Friday. President Trump's executive order suspends the entry of refugees into the United States for 120 days. The order also indefinitely stops the admission of Syrian refugees and for 90 days, bars individuals from seven predominantly Muslim countries. [Read the full statement.](#)

USCCB Chairmen Express Solidarity with Muslim Community, Deep Concern over Religious Freedom Issues, in Response to Executive Order on Refugees

Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski, Bishop of Springfield and Chairman of the USCCB Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, Most Reverend William E. Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore and Chairman of the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, and Most Reverend Oscar Cantú, Bishop of Las Cruces and Chairman of the USCCB Committee on International Justice and Peace, jointly issued a statement in response to the recent executive order on the new refugee policy announced by President Trump. [Read the full statement.](#)

USCCB Committee on Migration Chair Strongly Opposes Executive Order Because It Harms Vulnerable Refugee and Immigrant Families

President Donald J. Trump issued an Executive Order addressing the U.S. refugee admissions program and migration to the United States, generally. The executive order virtually shuts down the refugee admissions program for 120 days, reduces the number of refugees to be admitted to the United States this year from 110,000 to 50,000 individuals, and indefinitely suspends the resettlement of Syrian refugees. In addition, it prioritizes religious minorities suffering from religious persecution, thereby deprioritizing all other persons fleeing persecution; calls for a temporary bar on admission to the United States from a number of countries of particular concern (all Muslim majority); and imposes a yet-to-be determined new vetting process for all persons seeking entry to the United States. [Read more.](#)

USCCB and Major Catholic Organizations File Amicus Brief with U.S. Supreme Court Supporting Catholic Hospitals

On January 24, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and other Catholic charitable organizations filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court supporting Catholic and other religious health systems in cases involving the "church plan" exemption to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). The amicus brief states that an "established by a church" requirement to qualify for ERISA's "church plan" exemption "would pose a grave threat to the ability of many Catholic ministries to provide aid to the millions of needy individuals who benefit from their services each year." [Read more.](#)

USCCB, Religious organizations File Amicus Brief in Supreme Court Case *Gloucester County School Board v. G.G*

The case involves a "transgender boy" (biological girl), identified as "G.G.," who seeks to use the boys' restroom at her public high school. The student sued under Title IX (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex) and the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. The district court dismissed the case, but the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, in a 2-1 decision, ruled in favor of the student. The Gloucester County School Board sought review before the U.S. Supreme Court and received a temporary stay from the high Court that prohibits the student from using the boys' restroom while the case is on review. In October, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear the case. Other federal lawsuits of the same kind (student vs. school board) are on hold until this case is settled.

The USCCB and several other major religious denominations and faiths filed a brief before the Supreme Court supporting the School Board. [Read more.](#)

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The Right to Religious Freedom



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DECLARATIO DE LIBERTATE RELIGIOSA

DECRETUM DE ACTIVITATE MISSIONALI ECCLESIAE

DECRETUM DE PRESBYTERORUM MINISTERIO ET VITA

DECRETUM DE ACTIVITATE MISSIONALI ECCLESIAE

DECRETUM DE PRESBYTERORUM MINISTERIO ET VITA

CONSTITUTIO PASTORALIS DE ECCLESIA

IN MUNDO HUIUS TEMPORIS

Ego + Michael C. O'Neill, Ordinarius Regimontensis
Ego + J.C. van Nieuwenburg, Archiepiscopus - Episcopus
Hollandscheveldensis - Plakuit
Ego + Fr. Raphael Perotti, Archiepiscopus - Episcopus
→ Ego + Anselmus Lepore, Arch. Tit. S. Anacleto in Puglia
→ Ego procurator ad quos Augustinus Guinardus, Episcopus Tit.
Ego + Regidius Tagnoli, Arch. Tit. Myrensis

[Find out more](#) about what the Catholic Church teaches on religious freedom, including the groundbreaking Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*) from the Second Vatican Council.

Let's Talk! Small community gatherings are a great, simple way to build the life of our Church. They are also important for a healthy civil society. [Here are some ideas for using the new video to kick start a small-group conversation about religious freedom.](#)

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Non datur libertas sine veritate.