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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: Advancing the Freedom to Serve

The incoming administration has the opportunity to ensure that people of all faiths can continue to do their good work in serving their communities without having to violate their consciences or face crippling fines or onerous lawsuits. This would ensure that Americans remain free to serve. [Read more.](#)

Dialogue, Religious Freedom, and the Role of the Bishops in Public Life Archbishop Lori's Public Presentation to the USCCB General Assembly

The work our Committee does for religious freedom is not only, or even mostly, about resisting unjust federal mandates. We want to promote a vibrant and diverse civil society, where people and institutions have the freedom to truly encounter one another and to engage in respectful dialogue, including on the questions that may divide them the most. [Read more.](#)

Archbishop Lori on the Solemnity of Christ the King

On the last Sunday of each liturgical year, the church celebrates the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. This is a day when the church echoes one of the earliest Christian creeds: Jesus is Lord. As we conclude this Jubilee Year of Mercy, perhaps the greatest service we Christians can offer our country today -- wracked by distrust, political unrest and intolerance -- is to bear patient witness to the kingdom which transcends all earthly kingdoms. [Read more.](#)

Archbishop Gomez: Christian Doctors Face Increasing Threats

Faithful Catholics need to be aware of the ever-increasing serious threats to Christians living their faith in the field of medicine, warned Archbishop Jose Gomez of Los Angeles. [Read more.](#)

Deseret News: New HHS 'Gender Transition' Mandate Needs to be Challenged

Concerns over freedom of conscience and religious liberty are at times dismissed as paranoia. Yet real-life situations arising under federal mandates continue to strain conscientious objectors. Such may be the unintended consequences of a new and well-intended Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate on the medical treatment of children with gender dysphoria. Minor children and youths who suffer from gender dysphoria are highly vulnerable to a variety of anxieties. They deserve our empathy, help and consideration. But in trying to provide help to this population, government regulations can sometimes do more harm than good. [Read more.](#)

Archbishop Lori on Religious Freedom as Gift and Challenge

In 2009, the Church faced a significant religious freedom challenge. Catholics were surprised when legislation was proposed to reorganize our parishes. In essence, this bill would have sidelined the pastor from parish administration and instead mandated that this function be done by an elected committee of laity. In this plan also, the bishop would have been merely a figurehead. Both clergy and laity quickly mobilized against this bill. A large rally was held on the steps of the capitol, and happily, the bill was withdrawn. Well, the song ended but the melody lingered on. It seemed clear that we could no longer take religious freedom for granted. [Read more.](#)

Is the Religious Freedom Restoration Act the Future of Religious Liberty?

RFRAs have become the focus of intense political controversy. What do these laws actually do in practice? Are they a good idea? Would a different approach to protect religious liberty be better? This panel was held during the 2016 National Lawyers Convention in Washington, DC with Dr. John C. Eastman, Prof. Richard W. Garnett, Prof. William P. Marshall, and Prof. Vincent Phillip Muñoz. [Watch.](#)

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Video

The Right to Religious Freedom



SACROSANCTUM OECUMENICUM CONCILIUM VATICANUM II

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, Sacerdos Regimontensis
Ego + J.C. van Nieuwenburg, Sacerdos Archiepiscopatus - Episcopatus
Hollandiae - Flandriae
Ego + Fr. Raphael Perotti, Archiep. us. Episcopus
→ Ego + Anselmus Lepore, Arch. Tit. S. Pancratii in Pyrgo
→ Ego procurator ad quos Augustinus Guinardus, Sacerdos 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.