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by NCR Staff

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Following are NCR reader responses to recent news articles, opinion columns and theological essays with letters that have been edited for length and clarity.

Why now?

Why would Catholics be on edge (NCR, [Jan. 21, 2025](#))? Almost 60% of Catholics voted for Trump, while an Archbishop gave the invocation at his inauguration and

many members of the U.S. Bishops' Conference tacitly support the Republican Party.

It makes no sense that they are concerned now, especially when so many of them do not support Pope Francis. Where is their concern for reforming the institution of the Catholic Church? The continuation of Vatican II has been, for all basic purposes, shut down. The Synod started in 2022 and continued through October of 2024. I saw great support worldwide while the U.S. support came from active parishes wanting reform and from the religious communities who saw and expressed the need.

A vibrant study on active listening for both the clergy and the laity was addressed through communion, participation and mission for the Church — the people of God. Regrettably, many a U.S. diocese got no further than the listening sessions with little or no followup for the people in the pews. It is the means given to us from Francis for life giving change and reform that is desperately needed for today.

How many dioceses did anything to promote the Francis' encyclical Laudato Si'? Were study groups formed and encouraged? I never once heard about it from the pulpit, or of its importance for human kind.

These have been my concerns, are they the concerns of the Catholics "on edge"? Are we really going to address them now that some are concerned?

ANGIE URENDA
Wichita, Kansas



Hope under Trump

Although I join Mr. Winters in hoping that Trump has a successful presidency I am not sanguine about how the prospects of his success will impact the health of our republic (NCR, [Jan. 20, 2025](#)). His rhetoric included promises that would compromise the security and safety of many of our citizens as well as others who are not documented.

As a nation of immigrants we can understand the concerns of some that illegal immigration may compromise our national security. However, the animus which our legally arrived ancestors faced was not much different from the animus the new arrivals face which seems to include both those who are legal as well as those undocumented. It is ironic that the once persecuted are now the persecutors.

Trump has recently given the green light for his immigration enforcement officers to seek out undocumented persons in churches and schools as well as in courts. What will our ecclesial leaders say when we hear that children in parochial schools were rounded up? Will the bishops who supported Trump and the Republican Party, albeit mostly covertly, remain silent as they did during Trump's first administration? True, a few bishops argued against the family separation program but the majority of the USCCB was silent. I imagine we can expect their silence during the coming years as well.

CHARLES A. LE GUERN
Granger, Indiana

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Deportations un-Christian

I hear it asked: who should legitimately be deported; do we reenact policies that separate families at our borders as a way of forestalling migration; how will our economy be impacted by deportation of emigrants; how will our labor force be buoyed in the absence of migrant labor? As a resident of the United States, I ask why there is all this talk about deportation. It seems nonsensical when we consider

that a significant majority, about 63%, of our nation's population espouse Christianity, and though there are other religious/spiritual aspirants residing among us, we are quick to proclaim ourselves a Christian nation.

Being of good faith, we are aware that Jesus' message, clearly put forth in His Sermon on the Mount recounted in Matthew, Chapters 5 through 7, makes no reference to depriving, discounting, disparaging anyone. To what does Jesus call us? To extend mercy, compassion, hospitality — not to build a wall but to build a longer table to share the feast of all the resources we possess. In this case, maybe it is time that we stop focusing on rights and laws. Finally, I think it is also important to note that most of those human beings coming from Central and South America also embrace Christianity — they are our sisters and brothers in Jesus.

MARTIN J. DRESSMAN
Prairie Village, Kansas
