



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WEEKLY
from
Americans for Freedom of Religion

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U.S. Bishops Annual Report on Religious Liberty

<https://tinyurl.com/ysuujwdx>

“The State of Religious Liberty in the United States,” the annual report of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee for Religious Liberty, highlights positive developments as well as areas of concern heading into 2026.

The 60-page report, issued Feb. 17, commends Congress and the White House for efforts to advance school choice; although it notes that Congress’s passage of the Federal Scholarship Tax Credit allowing families to direct private scholarship funds to schools of their choosing, “did not include religious liberty protections.” So in 2026, the USCCB will be actively engaged in trying to ensure that families can use the scholarships for religious schools.

The bishops also commended the Trump administration for taking “immediate steps to combat gender ideology, which has corroded religious liberty in recent years,” and for a range of initiatives promoting partnership between religious organizations and government. They cited President Trump’s establishment of a Religious Liberty Commission, which includes several Catholic bishops as members and advisors.

The report raises concerns, however, about several administration initiatives on immigration. These include allowing immigration officers to carry out enforcement activities, without previously required agency approval, in or near protected areas, such as hospitals, schools, and churches; and “inconsistent policies” regarding access to immigration detention facilities, making it difficult to provide religious and pastoral services or administer the sacraments to detainees, “contrary to ICE’s own standards.”

The report deplores acts of political and anti-religious violence impacting religious freedom. In addition to continued incidents of vandalism and arson against Catholic churches, the bishops cite the mass shooting of schoolchildren at Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis; the murder of a young Jewish couple who worked at the Israeli Embassy, outside the Capital Jewish Museum in Washington, D.C.; and the assassination of Christian political activist Charlie Kirk on a Utah college campus, as among the most extreme manifestations of “politically and religiously motivated violence” plaguing the nation.

In coming weeks, we will provide details on specific religious liberty initiatives in America being supported by the U.S. Catholic bishops in 2026.

“It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God.” George Washington