News
Social Justice

Pens being used by President Donald Trump to sign executive orders are seen in a tray in the Oval Office of the White House Jan. 23, 2025, in Washington. (AP/Ben Curtis)

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As we witness a global and national shift in values and priorities that go against Catholic teachings, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious said, sisters must be fearless in embracing and embodying the Gospel.

In a statement released Jan. 28, LCWR, which represents about two-thirds of the nearly 36,000 Catholic sisters in the United States, said sisters have watched the changes "with grave concern," as they are "negatively impacting the health of the planet and the lives of millions of its most vulnerable inhabitants."

The group, a canonically recognized organization made up of the leaders of hundreds of congregations of Catholic sisters across the United States, is nonpartisan and careful to avoid aligning with any political party. The statement was published after the first tumultuous week of the second Donald Trump presidency, but said it is addressing "policies enacted by many governments, including our own in the United States, as well as choices being made by citizens," that "point to a rapid dismantling of values that we consider bedrock for the future of the global community."

It noted that sisters have continuously discerned how to respond to a changing world in recent years, but shifting priorities have reached a point where they need to "live our vocational call as women religious with a depth that may have never been required of us previously."

The statement said what is happening goes against the principles sisters have nurtured and protected for centuries, including:

- The inherent right to life and dignity of all human beings;
- The Gospel demands of love, welcome and care for all, especially the most vulnerable;
- The duty to welcome immigrants and provide care and aid to all;
- Standing against violence in all its forms;
- Dismantling systemic racism;
- Care for planet Earth;
- "Respect for the journey of all persons into the wholeness of their humanness";
- Alleviating poverty in all forms.

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"Staying steadfast to these principles in the face of powerful forces working towards contrary purposes may be one of the hardest challenges we will encounter — collectively and individually," it said. "The efforts to be the face of compassion and hope amid actions that create chaos and fear will not be easy. This is a time when we will need one another, and a time when we can lend our voices and our support to many of the organizations and people of faith who are laboring to bear witness to the dignity of each person."

The statement says the issues are not just political, but life and death.

"Lives all around us are at stake. All evidence shows that we will be seeing an increase in moral violations," it said.

But whatever happens, the statement says, Catholic sisters are called to be not just examples of Gospel priorities, but a living presence of hope and love.

"We will need to be women who stay informed, listen carefully to all voices and perspectives, and engage in serious and deep discernment to make wise choices so that we do not contribute hatred, fear, division, or violence to the world," the LCWR statement said. "Our decisions should lead us to become even more fully who we are called to be — bearers of love who refuse to relinquish our moral authority nor languish in despair."

This story appears in the **Trump's Second Term** feature series. View the full series.