Opinion

Guest Voices



Vice President JD Vance speaks as President Donald Trump listens during a meeting in the East Room of the White House Jan. 9 in Washington. (AP/Evan Vucci)



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January 12, 2026
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Renee Nicole Good, a 37-year-old mother of three, was killed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent Jonathan Ross on Jan. 7, at the site of an ICE enforcement in Minneapolis. She was shot three times while driving away from Ross.

> "We vow to celebrate and support every heroic mother who chooses life."
> —Vice President JD Vance, 2025, March for Life

Good was a U.S. citizen and an observer, one of countless people in American communities who have sacrificed their convenience and put their own safety at risk to ensure their neighbors might feel a little more secure during the Trump administration’s deportation campaign.

> "We will always stand for the sanctity of life and protect the most innocent and vulnerable in our society."
> —Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, 2021

The enforcement action that cost Good her life was a part of the Department of Homeland Security's "Operation Metro Surge," which began on Jan. 5. It is too soon to know who the 150 or so detainees are who have been swept up by the 2,000 agents deployed to the Twin Cities. But the New York Times reports 70% of those detained by ICE since deportations began have no criminal convictions, and ICE operations have grabbed an unknown but not insubstantial number of U.S. citizens or others in the U.S. legally.

> "I was saved by God to make America great again."
> —President Donald Trump, 2025, inaugural address

This second Trump administration came to power on the strength of overwhelming support from Roman Catholics and other Christians who are motivated, pro-life voters. The support of important Catholic and evangelical leaders has been critical to make this second term possible.

> "I was proud to be the most pro-life president in U.S. history."
> —Donald Trump, 2022

No matter how clear the Bible is about welcoming the stranger — a theme to which the Old Testament returns over 90 times — there is some considerable, partisan division among Christians about immigration policy. Yet protecting human life, we can feel sure, has been something Christians of all stripes have generally found it easy to agree about.

> "Every human life is a gift to the world."
> —President Donald Trump, 2021

That is why, quite naturally, the tone coming from the Trump administration since Good's life was taken by an ICE agent has been so jarring. President Trump described Good as behaving "viciously" and gives an impression that she had forfeited her right to her own life.

> "Reverence for every human life, one of the values for which our Founding Fathers fought, defines the character of our Nation."
> —President Donald Trump, 2018, proclamation for National Sanctity of Human Life Day

Republicans who have long championed protecting human life have said shocking things. Texas congressman and Senate candidate Wesley Hunt suggested that "you get to keep your life" only if you obey government. That’s un-American. But it also does not sound much like the Rep. Hunt who has previously championed the sanctity of life.

> "I am pro-life."
> —Representative Wesley Hunt, June 20, 2019



People gather for a vigil after an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer shot and killed a woman earlier in the day, Jan. 7, in Minneapolis. (AP/Bruce Kluckhohn)

Perhaps strangest of all is a zealous Roman Catholic like Vice President JD Vance, whose absence of sympathy for Good and her loved ones has been shocking. He called Good a "deranged leftist," as though she were a member of some other, less worthy species without any sign that his Catholic faith found her killing in the least way to be problematic.

> "Christianity, *imago dei*, the idea that we are all made in the image of our creator, means that we must respect the free will of every single person."
> —Vice President JD Vance, Oct. 30, 2025

When JD Vance speaks about unborn human beings and voices his opposition to abortion, he is uncompromisingly clear.

> "We march to protect the unborn; we march to proclaim and live out the sacred truth that every single child is a miracle and a gift from God."
> —Vice President JD Vance, 2025, March for Life

Good once was a child. She was born. She grew into an adult whose free will led her to observe ICE enforcements. Yet, where her killing is concerned, the vice president gives no sign of his respect for her free will or her life. Neither does he show any compassion for her family. Simply because he disagrees with her, he seems to say her killing was acceptable.

> "*President Trump will be the most pro-family, most pro-life American president of our lifetimes.*"
> *—Vice President JD Vance, 2025, March for Life*

The Roman Catholic Church to which Vance belongs is unambiguous about deportations, authoritatively calling them "infamies" and a "supreme dishonor to the Creator." Catholics can have good-faith disagreements about the best way to have a just immigration policy. But the inhumanity and violence (that includes denying rights to exercise religious belief) accompanying this administration's immigration enforcement is not something Catholics should see very differently.

> "I stand for everything that you stand for and that the church stands for."
> —Donald Trump, 2024, interview with Raymond Arroyo (EWTN)

What is happening now — from masked agents acting with impunity to inhumane detention conditions to the shootings in our streets — was all foreseeable before so many religiously motivated voters gave Trump their support again.

> "God has given you a sound mind, make wise decisions, use discernment and everything, but above all he's called us to love each other."
> —Gov. Kristi Noem, 2024, speech at the Faith & Freedom Coalition

Even if the first Trump administration that ended with the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol weren't enough to tell us what a vote for Trump and Vance would mean, the 2024 campaign was clear about their intentions when it came to immigrants and deportations, saying immigrants have "poisoned the blood of our country" and that

his administration would "stop the invasion very quickly."

> "Every person is worth protecting. And above all, we know that every human soul is divine, and every human life — born and unborn — is made in the holy image of Almighty God."
> —President Donald Trump, 2020, March for Life

Mass deportations — a phrase that conjures the darkest chapters in human history — was their goal. That has included people who came to the United States for protection, seeking asylum. There always were limits on who a second Trump administration would protect. Now we know a conscientious citizen like Renee Good, whose memory Trump insulted, was beyond their care.

> "Today, we focus our attention on the love and protection each person, born and unborn, deserves."
> —President Donald Trump, 2018, Proclamation for National Sanctity of Human Life Day

For too long, the deeds of the Trump administration have stood in sharp contrast to the reassuring words they have offered to religious believers. It has become impossible to ignore, but it should not surprise us. Years ago, Trump wrote in The Art of the Deal about telling people what they "want to believe" in order to get what he wants. The question for religious voters now is what they actually believe. So much effort went into electing Trump. The costs and the real meaning of all that no longer can be denied — maybe even by Trump.

> "I think it's horrible to watch. No, I hate to see it."
> —President Donald Trump, Jan. 8, 2026, shown video of his administration's agent killing Renee Good

Will it make any difference?

Advertisement

This story appears in the **Immigration Protests in Minneapolis** and **Immigration and the Church** feature series.
A version of this story appeared in the **Jan. 30-Feb. 12, 2026** print issue under the headline: After Renee Good, how can we pretend Trump and Vance are pro-life?.