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U.S. Vice President JD Vance and Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, retired archbishop of New York,

U.S. Vice President JD Vance and Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, retired archbishop of New York, are pictured in a combination photo. (OSV News/Reuters, Aaron Schwartz/The Good Newsroom/Gregory A. Shemitz)

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Cardinal Timothy Dolan said U.S. Vice President JD Vance "apologized" for "out of line" comments he made against the nation's Catholic bishops over immigration.

The cardinal — who recently retired as archbishop of New York and is now the co-chief of police chaplains in that city — recalled an undated conversation he had with Vance, and he spoke about it in a Feb. 19 interview with Mark Irons of EWTN News "In Depth."

During the 32-minute interview, which spanned a range of topics, Irons asked Dolan how he would "grade" Vance, a convert to Catholicism and, said Irons, "one of the highest profile Catholic politicians in our country."

The cardinal began by describing Vance as "a very good guy," adding, "I enjoy him a lot."

However, while agreeing "with a bunch of stuff that he talks about," Dolan admitted, "I would sometimes say, 'Uh oh, can't agree with you there.' "

Dolan said he "had a little tête-à-tête" with Vance sometime after "he suggested that bishops in the United States were pro-immigrant because we were making money."

In a Jan. 26, 2025, interview with CBS News' "Face the Nation," Vance said he thought "the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has frankly not been a good partner in commonsense immigration enforcement that the American people voted for," adding, "I hope … as a devout Catholic that they'll do better."

Vance said in that interview the USCCB "needs to actually look in the mirror a little bit and recognize that when they receive over $100 million to help resettle illegal immigrants, are they worried about humanitarian concerns or are they actually worried about their bottom line?"

Two days prior to Vance's appearance on that episode of "Face the Nation," the Trump administration had suspended a decades-long, congressionally established federal partnership with the USCCB and nine other national refugee resettlement agencies.

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The move followed President Donald Trump's Jan. 20, 2025, executive order halting the U.S. Refugee Assistance Program, a domestic initiative established by Congress in 1980 to formalize the process by which refugees vetted and approved by the U.S. government were legally resettled in the U.S.

The USCCB and several other agencies partnered with the government in refugee resettlement as part of USRAP. The Trump administration's suspension of its agreement with the USCCB resulted in the latter's laying off about a third of its resettlement staff.

The U.S. bishops also filed suit against the Trump administration seeking reimbursement for more than $24 million it had paid out for resettlement services. After several status reports filed by both sides, the litigation was voluntarily dismissed by the USCCB in January.

OSV News is awaiting a response from the USCCB on whether the $24 million in reimbursements was recovered.

Speaking to EWTN, Dolan said he had addressed Vance's claim directly with the vice president.

"When he (Vance) suggested that bishops in the United States were pro-immigrant because we were making money which was not only untrue, it was scurrilous — and he apologized," said Dolan. "He says, 'That was out of line and that's not true.' "

Catholic social teaching on immigration seeks to balance three interrelated principles: the right of persons to migrate in order to sustain themselves and their families; the right of a country to regulate its borders and immigration; and a nation's duty to conduct that regulation with justice and mercy.

The cardinal said that on other topics Vance has addressed — including "the family," "babies," "patriotism" and "the beauty of what the United States stands for" — "I say, 'Bravo.' "

At the same time, Dolan admitted he was "not too happy with" Vance's views on Ukraine, now marking the fourth year of Russia's full-scale invasion, which continues attacks launched in 2014.

"This is before he was vice president. He was not too behind the Ukrainians," Dolan said.

Invoking a baseball term and a legendary St. Louis Cardinals player, the cardinal said that "you're not going to get anybody batting a thousand," adding that "even Stan Musial, my hero … his lifetime average was, what, .331?"

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