

Following election, U.S. bishops stress human dignity

written by OSV News |



The Catholic Church “always insists on the dignity of the human person from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death, and we continue to insist on that,” Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services said Nov. 12.

The archbishop, who is president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, made the comments in a press briefing on the first of two daylong public sessions during the USCCB’s annual fall plenary in Baltimore Nov. 11-14.

He was joined by the chair of the bishops’ Committee on Migration, Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, and Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Va., chair of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

The prelates addressed the Church’s role on several issues in light of the results of the Nov. 5 presidential election. They talked about the importance of the Church advocating for the dignity of all human life, particularly on the issues of abortion and immigration as the country prepares for President-elect Donald Trump’s incoming administration.

Archbishop Broglio said that the bishops “don’t encourage illegal immigration,” but “we certainly do take care of those who come to this country and really represent the face of Christ in their need.”

He expressed the bishops' hope that "there will be an earnest effort to repair the immigration law in this country, and also there will be a renewed respect for the dignity of the human person."

OSV News asked the bishops about potential opportunities and challenges from the new administration on the issues of abortion, in vitro fertilization and immigration.

For all three of those issues, Bishop Burbidge said, "it's the truth that guides us" and "the protection of the sacredness of all human life, the dignity that belongs to every person as a child of God, must be uplifted and defended."

"And so, we will — as we've always done with all administrations — continue to dialogue with our elected officials," he said, "to take the opportunities to educate when we can and to have respectful conversations."

Bishop Burbidge was later asked by a reporter from The Associated Press about the results of the abortion ballot amendments at the state level, which included three victories for the pro-life movement, with Florida, Nebraska and South Dakota all rejecting measures adding protections for abortion in their state constitutions. Seven other states adopted protections for abortion in their constitutions in 2024.

Regarding the lessons learned from the ballot measures in the recent election, Bishop Burbidge said that one lesson is "to be ahead of the game, to get out early in messaging because the truth has to be conveyed concisely and in a clear way to all the faithful." He said another major lesson is to clarify "the extreme positions of those who are working to legalize abortion in their states."

He said that reaching out to young people in creative ways was also a key factor in successfully spreading a pro-life message in response to these amendments.

Bishop Seitz told OSV News that while the bishops "always look for ways in which we can collaborate with the administration" and "there will still be areas where we can do that," for "areas where the positions and actions that are taken are contrary to the teaching of the Church, then we'll express our right concern."