

# Trump orders expanded access to IVF, contrary to Church

written by OSV News |



President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Feb. 18 to expand access to in vitro fertilization (IVF), a practice opposed by the Catholic Church due to the destruction of human embryos. The order aims to reduce out-of-pocket and health plan costs for IVF treatments, but experts suggest it may not lead to a significant increase in birth rates.

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# Trump orders investigation of federal 'anti-Christian' bias

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President Trump has announced a task force led by former Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi to investigate anti-Christian bias within the federal government. Bondi will head a new executive order aimed at addressing perceived discrimination.

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## **Donald Trump sworn in, pledging border crackdown**

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President Donald Trump was sworn in for a second, nonconsecutive term in the White House Jan. 20, becoming the nation's 47th president four years after he left office as its 45th.

In his inaugural address, Trump pledged to reverse what he called "America's decline."

"My recent election is a mandate to completely and totally reverse a horrible betrayal and all of these many betrayals that have taken place, and to give the people back their faith, their wealth, their democracy. And, indeed, their freedom," Trump said.

Trump also addressed his own assassination attempt while campaigning in Butler, Pa., last July, arguing, "I felt then and believe even more so now that my life was saved for a reason — I was saved by God to make America great again."

In his address, Trump confirmed his plans to sign a series of executive orders on Day One, including declaring a national emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border, shutting down "illegal entry" and beginning "the process of returning millions and millions of criminal aliens back to the places from which they came."

While Trump has not yet offered specifics on how he would carry out such a program, mass deportations more broadly run contrary to the Second Vatican Council's teaching in "Gaudium et Spes" condemning "deportation" among other actions, such as abortion, that "poison human society" and give "supreme dishonor to the Creator," a teaching St. John Paul II affirmed in two encyclicals on moral truth and life issues.

Executive orders are legally binding directives from the president and are published in the Federal Register. Conversely, the term "executive actions" is broader and may include informal proposals for policy the president would like to see enacted. While it is typical for new

presidents to issue some executive orders on their first day to signal certain priorities, Trump signaled plans that were broader in scope. Some of his planned orders are expected to face legal challenges.

JD Vance, previously Ohio's senator, also took the oath of office, becoming the nation's second Catholic vice president. Justice Brett Kavanaugh administered his oath.

The inauguration ceremony was moved indoors amid frigid temperatures in the nation's capital, taking place in the Capitol Rotunda rather than the exterior West Front of the Capitol Building.

An opening prayer was delivered by Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York. He cited the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, whose federal holiday was also observed Jan. 20, "who warned without God our efforts turned to ashes."

The cardinal prayed that Trump "may know your designs," and also wished God's blessings on President Joe Biden in the final moments of his term.

In a message to Trump, Pope Francis expressed "the assurance of my prayers that Almighty God will grant you wisdom, strength, and protection in the exercise of your high duties."

"Inspired by your nation's ideals of being a land of opportunity and welcome for all, it is my hope that under your leadership the American people will prosper and always strive to build a more just society, where there is no room for hatred, discrimination or exclusion," Pope Francis said, adding, "I also ask God to guide your efforts in promoting peace and reconciliation among peoples."

But in a Jan. 19 interview with an Italian television program, Pope Francis said Trump's mass deportation plans would be a "disgrace" if they materialized.

"That's not right. That's not how you solve problems," the pontiff said.

At the ceremony's conclusion, interfaith clergy members, including Father Frank Mann of Brooklyn, N.Y., delivered a blessing. The retired Brooklyn priest developed an unlikely friendship with Trump after taking an interest in the Trump family's gravesite. While visiting a cemetery in Queens, Father Mann discovered that the gravesite of Trump's parents and grandparents was overgrown.