

JD Vance speaks on reconciling his Catholic faith with MAGA immigration policy

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Vice President JD Vance has spoken at length about reconciling his Catholic faith with the immigration policies of the Trump administration, addressing concerns raised by Church leaders earlier this year.

Speaking to The New York Post in the latest episode of “Pod Force One”, released on Wednesday, the vice president, who converted to Catholicism in 2019, said the administration sought to uphold migrants’ dignity while ensuring the United States could control its southern border.

“The Vatican, especially under Pope Francis, had a particular line on immigration,” Vance said. “I try to interpret this stuff charitably, partially because I’m a new Catholic. I think the Catholic Church recognises we have to have border control. That’s very clearly written in Catholic teaching — nations are allowed sovereignty, they’re allowed to control their own borders.”

While acknowledging the Church’s appeal for compassion toward migrants, Vance said Catholic teaching also permitted governments to act lawfully to secure their borders. “It’s always useful to remind ourselves that a lot of the people who have come into our country, they’re struggling in some way. They’re human beings,” he said. “Even though we have to engage in immigration enforcement ... I do have a responsibility to try to remember their humanity.”

Vance’s comments followed criticism from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, which in January denounced the government’s immigration stance. The vice president maintained that enforcement and respect for human dignity were not incompatible. “Yes, you can have your border policy; yes, you can enforce your borders,” he said. “You also have to try to remember that all 8 billion people who are alive on this planet are God’s creatures. We owe them a certain respect and a certain dignity.”

He argued that under the Biden administration, millions of migrants entered the United States illegally or through loosely regulated programmes, accusing officials of having “waved the magic asylum” to allow the entries.

“When you encourage illegal immigration at the scale that Joe Biden did, you empower the cartels,” he said, warning that traffickers were “selling 12-year-old girls as sex slaves.” Vance insisted that halting illegal migration was the best way to protect both migrants and American citizens. “Thanks to President Trump’s leadership, that’s exactly what we’ve done,” he said, noting that border officials recently recorded the lowest number of migrant crossings in modern history.

He confirmed that about two million people had been removed or had left voluntarily in recent months. “We’re trying to remove as many as we possibly can,” he said. “That was a combination of deportations and what we call self-deportations ... We’re just gonna keep on working at it.”

During the interview, Vance also reflected on a recent visit to Jerusalem, where he was moved to tears at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, believed to be the site of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection. “You kneel down ... and you can actually place your hand where the cross would have been placed on Golgotha,” he said. “I was completely overcome with emotion.”