

ASSESSING BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

Catholic League president Bill Donohue assesses President Biden's first year:

January 20 marks President Biden's first year in office. We leave it to others to assess his record on the economy, COVID, our southern border, foreign policy and other issues. On the policies that matter most to us—the life issues and religious liberty—he has failed.

We have links to three reports: President Biden's [first day in office](#); his reversal of President Trump's [religious liberty policies](#); and the extent to which his policies [departed from Catholic teachings](#).

President Trump issued one executive order on his first day in office; Biden issued seventeen. Most of what Biden addressed were policies governing regulatory matters, ethics in government, immigration, racial discrimination, climate change, student loans, evictions, and COVID. The one that got our attention was his policy on workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The latter is of concern to us because of its religious liberty implications. As often happens these days, sexual orientation and gender identity collide with religious liberty interests. We argue that priority should be given to religious liberty. Unlike sexual orientation and gender identity, religious rights are explicitly mentioned in the Constitution. Biden disagrees, maintaining that this First Amendment right should take a back seat to sexual orientation and gender identity.

On January 20, 2021, Biden's executive order on this subject not only affirmed his commitment to non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity—never even implying that they may eviscerate competing religious liberty

claims—it went so far as to say that children “will not be denied access to the restroom, the locker room, or school sports.”

Translated this means that boys in the public schools will be allowed to compete against girls in sports and shower with them. All they have to do to qualify is lie about their sex.

On day one, the Biden administration issued a new form for those who want to contact the White House. It was geared to the sexually confused, namely to those who think they belong to the opposite sex: they can choose whatever pair of pronouns they want, “she/her” or “he/him.”

The new form also allows someone to choose “they/them.” Nothing was said whether those who consider themselves to be two persons should have a right to cast two votes in an election. If they were denied, would this not be a clear case of gender discrimination?

We tallied eighteen abortion policies enunciated by Trump that were overturned by Biden in his first year; twelve policies on religious liberty were reversed; and six policies on sex (or what they erroneously call gender) were overridden.

Trump is not a Catholic; Biden identifies as one. Indeed, Biden considers himself to be a “devout Catholic,” and carries rosary beads to prove it. Yet in 2021, we found sixty-nine instances where his policies departed from Catholic teachings.

Most of the departures involved issues such as abortion, transgender rights, and religious liberty. For example, Biden became the first president to declare that the public should pay for abortion—all abortions. He insisted that transgender persons should be a protected class, even to the point of forcing Catholic doctors and hospitals to violate their conscience by performing sex-transition surgery. He also rolled back the religious exemptions afforded faith-based programs.

Biden's Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, ordered an end to the "Commission on Unalienable Rights," a panel that had been instituted by his predecessor, Mike Pompeo. Why? He said this stellar document overemphasized religious liberty.

We would be lying if we thought that 2022 will be any better. It is one thing to be indifferent to the life issues and religious liberty, quite another to be hostile to them.