

# RESISTANCE TO POPE'S PLEAS GROWING IN U.S.

There is nothing new about the Catholic Church's opposition to abortion or human trafficking, but what Pope Francis said about them on February 8 is worth a closer look.

The pope decried the fact that many nations are retreating on these key life issues. What he said bears application to the vector of change apparent in the United States.

The pope said "it was painful" to observe that "under the pretext of guaranteeing presumed subjective rights, a growing number of legal systems in our world seem to be moving away from their inalienable duty to protect human life at every one of its phases." Calling the right to life "a foundational human right," the Holy Father said, "If we deprive the weakest among us of the right to life, how can we effectively guarantee respect for every other right?"

Among those other rights, he noted in a separate forum, is the right to be free from exploitation. He pointedly mentioned the plight of those who suffer from human trafficking, the most vulnerable among us. He encouraged all of us to continue "praying and fighting together" in hopes of ridding ourselves of this horrendous condition.

Unfortunately, in the United States we are going backwards on both issues.

President Biden is determined to be the most pro-abortion president in American history. He spent his first few weeks in office rolling back many restrictions on abortion enacted by the Trump administration. Moreover, never has Biden, or anyone on his staff, called the right to life "a foundational human right."

Just as disturbing are the Biden administration's policies governing border security. Let's be honest: He is bent on relaxing the strictures that worked to stop the caravans of Central Americans from crashing our borders. Now they are back. Who is leading them? Human traffickers. They traffic in women, children and drugs.

Biden professes to be a "devout" Catholic, and it would be unfair to question his personal relationship with God. But he can be judged on his abortion policies, and on that score he fails miserably. As for human trafficking, no one champions its cause. But that matters little. What matters is whether the policies being promoted act as a deterrent or a lure.

Pope Francis has a right to expect more fidelity to his teachings from those who wear their Catholicism on their sleeve than from those who do not. And he certainly should expect more from them than those who are not Catholic.