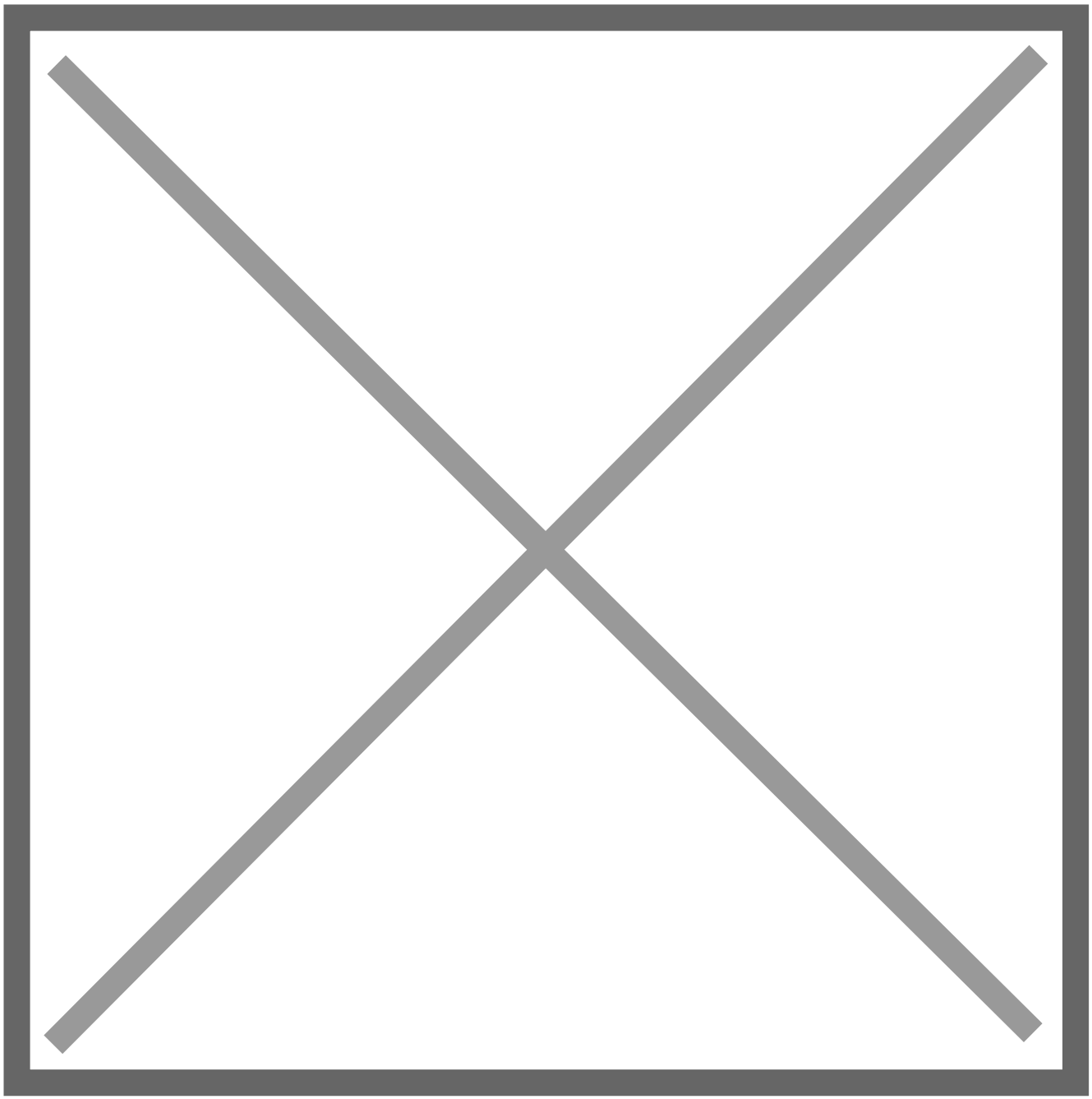
News



Sudanese refugees collect water from a borehole at the Gorom Refugee Camp near Juba, in South Sudan, Jan. 26, 2024. President Donald Trump said in a series of social media posts Nov. 27, 2025, that he will "permanently pause" all immigration from what he called "Third World Countries." (OSV News/Reuters/Samir Bol)

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President Donald Trump said in a series of social media posts on Thanksgiving Day that he will "permanently pause" all immigration from what he called "Third World Countries," prompting concern from Catholic immigration advocates.

Trump's comments followed the shooting of two West Virginia National Guard members in the nation's capital Nov. 26. The victims were 20-year-old Sarah Beckstrom, who died from her injuries Nov. 27, and 24-year-old Andrew Wolfe, who remained in serious condition Dec. 1. Authorities identified Rahmanullah Lakanwal as the suspect in the shooting, an Afghan national.

On Nov. 27, the State Department subsequently stopped the issuance of U.S. visas for all Afghan nationals, arguing on social media it was "taking all necessary steps to protect U.S. national security and public safety."

Anna Gallagher, executive director of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc., or CLINIC, said in a Dec. 1 statement the organization "firmly rejects any call to 'permanently pause migration.'"

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"As we enter the Advent season, we remember that the Holy Family themselves were migrants seeking safety," Gallagher said. "Catholic social teaching is clear:

every person has inherent dignity, and those fleeing danger must be protected, not turned away. Proposals like this betray both our moral values and our nation's long commitment to offering refuge."

In his posts, Trump argued the action was part of an "aim of achieving a major reduction in illegal and disruptive populations."

But J. Kevin Appleby, senior fellow for policy at the Center for Migration Studies of New York and the former director of migration policy for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, told OSV News Dec. 1, "The administration is using this tragedy as a political opportunity to advance its anti-immigrant agenda. It's a page out of the nativist playbook: blame every immigrant for the action of one."

"Placing collective guilt on an entire group — half of the world — for the act of one person is contrary to American principles of justice, not to mention Catholic moral teaching," he said.

This story appears in the **Immigration and the Church** feature series. View the full series.