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Among the many important issues facing the Catholic community today is immigration. Few would argue that a sovereign nation has a right to manage and control its borders, but society must also respect the dignity of every person.

What does Catholic social teaching have to say on this complex matter?

Tanner: Catholic teaching views immigration through the lens of human dignity, and human dignity is not dependent on a person's citizenship or immigration status. The Gospel's call to welcome the stranger affirms that all people have a right to flourish in their home communities, and when that's not possible, to migrate in search of safety and opportunity.



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Sounds like the Church has been thinking about this for a long time.

Tanner: Absolutely. The Vatican's position has developed through papal teaching over centuries. The Church has consistently stressed that these rights go beyond legal status and reside in the moral worth of each human. The well-being of each person is linked to the well-being of us all.

Can you offer any examples of how the Church's teaching is reflected in today's environment?

Tanner: In Pope Leo's first apostolic exhortation, which is one of the most important types of teaching documents, he called on bishops around the world to take on the mantle of social justice in defense of the most vulnerable in society, including migrants. No Christian can regard the poor simply as a societal problem. They're part of the family.

It's our duty to make their voices heard in different ways in order to point out and denounce structural issues.

The Pope's work here built on another aspect of Catholic teaching that Pope Francis spoke to in 2024. In his encyclical "Dilexit Nos" the Pope underscored the love for the poor and for the migrant, really saying that inequality is the root of all social ills.

Where do you see the U.S. fitting into all this?

Tanner: Very recently, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued a special message on immigration addressing their concern for the evolving situation impacting migrants in the United States. The message marked the first time in 12 years that the USCCB has spoken as a body of bishops on this topic.

Does Mensuram Bonam speak to this issue?

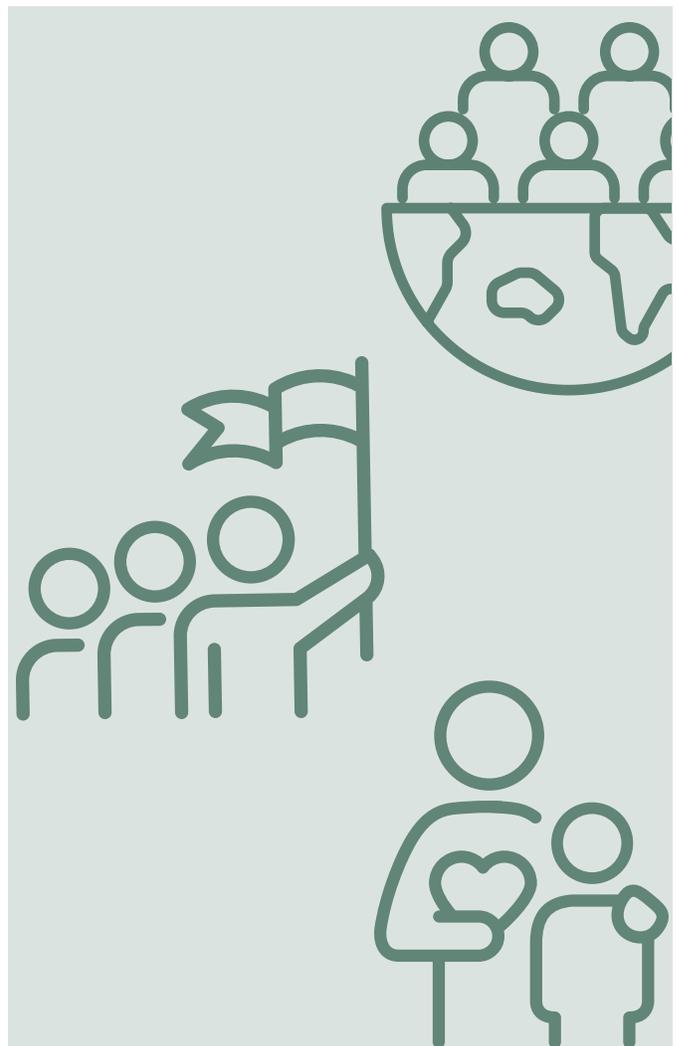
Tanner: It does. The document mentions that people deserve dignity for their own growth and well-being, and whatever one's status, whether worker or refugee, every person warrants the dignity of being seen and heard. We're called on to lift our voices and to help.



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How does all of this roll up to inform the shareholder advocacy work you’re doing?

Burnell: We’re certainly inspired to use all the tools at our disposal. Our current engagements with portfolio companies span a range of sectors. We’re working to uphold the human rights of immigrants within the meat processing industry, Tyson Foods specifically, and within private prisons and detention centers, where we’re engaging with CoreCivic and The GEO Group. We’re also addressing human rights issues in the retail sector and the airline industry.

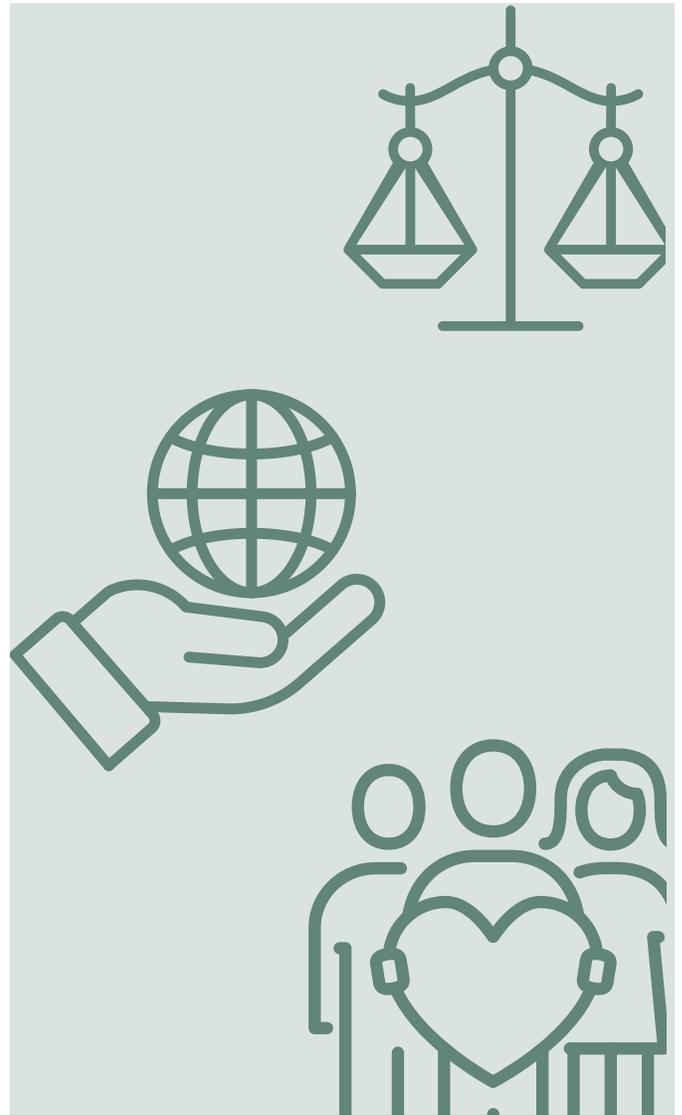


Any specifics?

Burnell: We filed shareholder resolutions with two large U.S. companies operating in distinct sectors. One is the nation's largest home improvement retailer, and our concerns focus on the company's handling of sensitive license plate data from parking lot surveillance cameras, particularly the sharing of such information with third parties, including law enforcement.

The second company provides security on extrajudicial deportation flights for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. In this case, we are seeking a report on the effectiveness of the company's due diligence process, to determine whether its services contribute to violations of international human rights law and exposes the company to material risks.

With the resolutions filed, we aim to engage constructively with both companies. We expect to learn more in the coming months as they respond to these requests.



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