

Monday's presidential Executive Order *Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government* states that "[b]asing Federal policy on truth is critical to scientific inquiry, public safety, morale, and trust in government itself."

We agree. Unfortunately, this executive order ignores essential truths about the human person and risks a reductionist understanding of God's handiwork (Ephesians 2:10).

The executive order does not sufficiently take into account the existence of millions of people in the United States whose reproductive organs, sex chromosomes, and/or physical appearance do not all align in the direction of one sex. *Dignitas Infinita* declares Church teaching that all persons "must be recognized and treated with respect and love due to their inalienable dignity."¹ The President's order violates Church teaching by failing to recognize the existence of intersex persons.

This executive order would seemingly require women with androgen insensitivity syndrome (who have XY chromosomes, but generally appear female and have been raised as female) to have male passports, use men's restrooms, and play on men's sports teams, and would likewise require men with de la Chapelle syndrome (who have XX chromosomes, but generally appear male and have been raised as male) to have female passports, use women's restrooms, and play on women's sports teams.

Furthermore, it will lead to further instances of policing and harassment of cisgender women and girls who are judged insufficiently "feminine."²

The executive order also, without evidence, conflates the experience of being transgender with adherence to "gender ideology." In addition, it dismisses the concept of gender identity as "subjective" and therefore not "meaningful," despite the international medical community's recognition of the fact that some people have an inner experience of gender that does not match their other markers of sex but that, like other "subjective" experiences (such as pain or love), is both consistent over the long-term and observable through words and behavior.³

¹ Declaration of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith *Dignitas Infinita* on Human Dignity, April 8, 2024, #2: <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2024/04/08/240408c.html>.

² For examples of harassment that has already occurred, see: Matt DeRienzo, "Woman mistaken for transgender harassed in Walmart bathroom," *News-Times*, May 16, 2016: <https://www.newstimes.com/local/article/Woman-mistaken-for-transgender-harassed-in-7471666.php#photo-10075104>; Eric Nicholson, "Self-Appointed Bathroom Cop Catches Dallas Woman Using Women's Restroom," *Dallas Observer*, April 29, 2016: <https://www.dallasobserver.com/news/self-appointed-bathroom-cop-catches-dallas-woman-using-womens-restroom-8259104>; and Hannah Schoenbaum, "Utah governor says school board member who questioned a student's gender 'embarrassed the state,'" *Associated Press*, February 8, 2024: <https://apnews.com/article/transgender-athlete-utah-school-board-member-governor-0aefa9baeb3cb5787687c8db02bf6241>.

³ Cf. Geoffrey M. Reed et al., "Disorders related to sexuality and gender identity in the ICD-11: revising the ICD-10 classification based on current scientific evidence, best clinical practices, and human rights considerations," *World Psychiatry* 15:3 (2016): 205-221: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5032510/>.

Our experience of both ministering among and being blessed by the leadership of transgender people has strengthened our conviction that transgender people are who they say they are, and that they, too, bear the immense dignity of being made in the image of God.

An executive order which ignores the complexity of human existence in favor of ideological shortcuts fails to live in the truth and therefore fails to promote the dignity of the human person. In addition, the order's positioning of trans people and allies as "attackers" subtly encourages "enforcement" of the order's ideology through violence.

Fortunate Families calls for the Trump administration to reverse this short-sighted executive order and instead model a common-sense approach to human sexuality that acknowledges and respects the actual diversity of human experience and the right to life, safety, and dignity of *every* human being.