

Fraternite Notre Dame Statement

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For many years, Fraternite Notre Dame, founded by His Excellency, Bishop Jean Marie Roger Kozik, serving the poor around the world, has expressed its concern during the various Sessions on Human Rights, exposing growing religious discrimination against Christians.

The terrible current persecutions experienced by Christians around the world clearly show it. The terrible ordeal of our Eastern brethren seems to last forever and attacks against Christians are multiplied in the west.

One of the causes is constant fuel being poured onto religious hatred. In France, the State maintains religious conflicts, notably through the media outlets. Freedom of expression does not mean freedom to insult Religions. When you have esteem for someone, you respect him. True liberty begets respect for one's neighbor's religious beliefs. True secularism is not sectarian or tyrannical, which is the case in France.

To the contrary, respecting other people's beliefs, religions and cultures should be the prerogative of genuine secularism.

Instead of digging trenches, states should rather strive with the same obstination and prudence, to build bridges.

Erecting barriers between religions, under the pretext of secularism is truly deplorable. The state favors an atmosphere of hatred, which lead to sectarian behaviors. What should we think of a school principal, who gives detention time to a pupil because she is wearing a small cross? Nobody is offended when seeing people wearing sport or specific insignia or a horned devil; but wearing a small cross or some religious insignia in 2015 is unacceptable.

At Christmas time, nativity sets in public places where forbidden in France. The state, however, uses the names of Christmas and Easter, which are Christian feasts. In France, should not we start using the word: "*Christiano-contempt*"?

But contempt is soon to be replaced with persecution. The bloody religious persecutions endured by Christians in the Middle East might soon take over Europe, if the states keep fueling an atmosphere of religious hatred, under the guise of tolerance and Fraternity.

I shall close with these words from Pope Francis: "*Today, when we walk in the street, let us feel in communion with our numerous brothers and sisters who are not free to express their faith.*"

[End of the Statement from Fraternite Notre Dame]