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News and resources from the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty



Free to Serve USCCB Religious Liberty News

"We are Catholics, We are Americans"

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Papal Visit

The Holy Father's journey to the United States was filled with words and gestures of support for religious freedom. At the White House, he [publicly supported the religious liberty work of the U.S. bishops](#). After the Canonization Mass of Junipero Serra, he [visited the Little Sisters of the Poor](#), who have courageously fought for conscience rights for people of faith. In Philadelphia, he urged us to [cherish and protect our heritage of religious freedom](#), for this heritage serves as a bulwark against a modern tyranny that would impose a uniform way of life on our country. Responding to a reporter on his flight back to Rome, Pope Francis voiced [support for conscience rights, including for government officials](#).

Read what Pope Francis had to say, and be encouraged!

New Video

What is Religious Freedom?



Religious freedom is not only that of private worship. This [4 minute video](#) features stories of the importance of religious freedom for institutions that perform the works of mercy - educating children, feeding the hungry, and healing the sick.

Religious Freedom Summit

On September 18, The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, hosted a [Religious Freedom Summit](#), which was co-sponsored by the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty (among many others). Archbishop Lori gave the opening keynote, which you can read here:

Religious Liberty as a Cornerstone of Human Dignity

My warmest thanks to all who have organized this summit on religious freedom in these days just prior to the visit of Pope Francis to the United States.

Speaking of Pope Francis, let me begin these reflections on religious liberty as a cornerstone of human dignity by mentioning a few of his quotes, so as to set the stage for our topic. The first sounds like a dire warning: "When, in the name of an ideology, there is an attempt to remove God from society, it ends up adoring idols, and very soon men and women lose their way, their dignity is trampled and their rights violated" (September 23, 2014). The following two quotes are exhortations: "Religious freedom is not only that of private thought or worship. It is the liberty to live, both privately and publicly, according to the ethical principles resulting from found truth" (June 20, 2014). And again: "We must promote religious liberty for all people. Every man and woman

must be free to profess his or her faith, whatever it might be. Why? Because that man and that woman are children of God" (May 20, 2013).

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Non datur libertas sine veritate.