

# RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

## Pope Francis, Shepherd of Truth

Notable quotations from Pope Francis and official teachings  
of the Roman Catholic Church

### COMMITTED CATHOLICS

American Catholics are committed to building a society which is truly tolerant and inclusive, to safeguarding the rights of individuals and communities, and to rejecting every form of unjust discrimination. With countless other peoples of good will, they are likewise concerned that efforts to build a just and wisely ordered society respect their deepest concerns and their right to religious liberty.

### “PRECIOUS POSSESSIONS”

That freedom remains one of America’s most precious possessions... As my brothers, the United States Bishops, have reminded us all are called to be vigilant, precisely as good citizens, to preserve and defend that freedom from everything that would threaten or compromise it.

### “FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT”

Religious freedom... is a fundamental right which shapes the way we interact socially and personally with our neighbors whose religious views differ from our own. The ideal of interreligious dialogue, where all men and women, from different religious traditions, can speak to one another, without arguing. This is what religious freedom allows.



### JOIN YOUR VOICES

In a world where various forms of modern tyranny seek to suppress religious freedom, or ..., to try to reduce it to a subculture without right to a voice in the public square, or to use religion as a pretext for hatred and brutality, it is imperative that the followers of the various religious traditions join their voices in calling for peace, tolerance and respect for the dignity and the rights of others.

### “BROTHERLY LOVE”

The Quakers who founded Philadelphia were inspired by a profound evangelical sense of the dignity of each individual and the ideal of a community united by brotherly love... That sense of fraternal concern for the dignity of all, especially the weak and the vulnerable, became an essential part of the American spirit.

### BUILDERS OF PEACE

I ... thank all those, of whatever religion, who have sought to serve God, the God of peace, by building cities of brotherly love, by caring for our neighbors in need, by defending the dignity of God’s gift, the gift of life in all its stages, and by defending the cause of the poor and the immigrant.

### CHERISH AND PRESERVE FREEDOM

Let us preserve freedom. Let us cherish freedom. Freedom of conscience, religious freedom, the freedom of each person, each family, each people, which is what gives rise to rights. May this country and each of you be renewed in gratitude for the many blessings and freedoms that you enjoy. .. May you defend these rights, especially your religious freedom, for it has been given to you by God Himself. May He bless you all. I ask you, please, say a little prayer for me.

(Sources: Papal visit to the United States of America, Welcoming Ceremony at White House, Washington, D.C., 9/23/15, Meeting for Religious Liberty with Hispanic Community and other Immigrants, Philadelphia, 9/26/15).

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3230 McHenry, Cincinnati, Ohio 45211  
(513) 662-JESU (5378)  
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