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## Free to Serve USCCB Religious Liberty News *"We are Catholics, We are Americans"*

October 2016  
Vol. II: No. 9

### New and Notable

#### Interfaith Leaders Call on President and Congress to Reject Biased Religious Liberty Report

Archbishop William E. Lori, Chairman of the USCCB's Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, and Bishop Gregory J. Mansour of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, joined leaders from diverse faiths in writing to President Barack Obama, Senate President Pro Tempore Orrin Hatch, and House Speaker Paul Ryan concerning a report released last month by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The letter calls upon these political leaders "to renounce publicly the [report's] claim that 'religious freedom' and 'religious liberty' are 'code words' or a 'pretext' for various forms of discrimination." [Read more.](#)

#### Archbishop Lori: Troubling Claims in Report Raise Stakes for Religious Freedom

"On Oct. 7, I joined a diverse group of leaders, representing a broad spectrum of perspectives, in calling on President Barack Obama, Sen. Orrin Hatch and Speaker Paul Ryan to renounce the troubling claims put forth by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The commission's document, titled 'Peaceful Coexistence,' recommends measures that purport to balance religious freedom and nondiscrimination laws. The choice of title would be humorous were the stakes not so high, for the proposed recommendations would achieve 'peaceful coexistence' by simply steamrolling religious concerns." [Read more.](#)

**USCCB President: Gospel Serves the Common Good, Not Political Agendas**  
"At this important time in our nation's history, I encourage all of us to take a moment to reflect on one of the founding principles of our republic - the freedom of religion. It ensures the right of faith communities to preserve the integrity of their beliefs and proper self-governance. There have been recent reports that some may have sought to interfere in the internal life of the Church for short-term political gain. If true, this is troubling both for the well-being of faith communities and the good of our country." [Read the rest of the statement.](#)

**Archbishop Lori says "The Glue is Missing" at Annual Red Mass in St. Louis**  
"Now, it seems, we often lack the tools to have coherent discussions about things that really matter in our society. Indeed we seem to have lost the very framework for thoughtful discussion. We've forgotten how to think about the issues in ways that go beyond party politics, special interests, personal preferences, and sound bites. So what is the "glue" meant to hold together our very diverse and divisive society? How can we find at least a modicum of unity amid our differences? I would submit to you that the missing "glue" is nothing other than the natural law, that universal, in-born sense of objective right and wrong by which every person participates in the wisdom and goodness of the Creator." [Read more.](#)

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## Video

### The Right to Religious Freedom



SACROSANCTUM OECUMENICUM CONCILIUM VATICANUM II

DECLARATIO DE LIBERTATE RELIGIOSA

DECRETUM DE ACTIVITATE MISSIONALI ECCLESIAE

DECRETUM DE PRESBYTERORUM MINISTERIO ET VITA

DECRETUM DE ACTIVITATE MISSIONALI ECCLESIAE

DECRETUM DE PRESBYTERORUM MINISTERIO ET VITA

CONSTITUTIO PASTORALIS DE ECCLESIA

IN MUNDO HUIUS TEMPORIS

Ego + Michael C. O'Neill, Ordinarius Regimenensis  
Ego + J.C. van Nieuwenburg, Archiepiscopus - Episcopus  
Hollandsche Oostindische Archidiaconus  
Ego + Fr. Raphael Perotti, Archiepiscopus - Episcopus  
→ Ego + Anselmus Lepore, Archidiaconus in Pygma  
→ Ego procurator pro Episcopo Augustinus Gunderut, Episcopus  
Ego + Regidius Tagnozzi, Archidiaconus Myrensis

[Find out more](#) about what the Catholic Church teaches on religious freedom, including the groundbreaking Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*) from the Second Vatican Council.

Let's Talk! Small community gatherings are a great, simple way to build the life of our Church. They are also important for a healthy civil society. [Here are some ideas for using the new video to kick start a small-group conversation about religious freedom.](#)

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*Non datur libertas sine veritate.*