

Religious freedom is synod's signature issue

John L. Allen Jr. | Oct. 11, 2010



Worshippers light candles after attending a weekly Mass at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Baghdad, Iraq, Oct. 3. The Vatican is hosting a Synod of Bishops for the Middle East Oct. 10-24, turning the spotlight on Christian communities in the region. (CNS/ Reuters)

ROME -- It's only day one of the Oct. 10-24 Synod of Bishops for the Middle East, but already its signature issue has come into focus: Religious freedom, seen as the cornerstone of a healthy democratic society, and as a universal cause rather than special pleading for the region's embattled Christian minority.

Freedom of conscience is "not so much a right to be claimed for Christians," said Patriarch Antonios Naguib of the Egyptian Coptic church this morning. Instead, he said, it's a "universal right, which Christians and Muslims defend together for the common good."

"We must emerge from a logic in defence of the rights of Christians only, and engage in the defence of the rights of all," Naguib said.

Read the full report here: [Religious freedom is synod's signature issue](#) [1]

John Allen is in Rome for the Synod of Bishops for the Middle East. Check [NCR Today](#) [2] throughout the day for more coverage. Here are the stories Allen has filed already:

- [On Israel, synod walks line between criticism and bashing](#) [3]
- [Beyond exodus, a Christian influx in the Middle East](#) [3]
- [Pope sketches 'positive secularism' for Middle East](#) [4]
- [Beyond a 'Darth Vader' view of secularism](#) [5]
- [Middle East synod is unique, and here's why](#) [6]

Source URL (retrieved on 01/26/2015 - 21:51): <http://ncronline.org/news/vatican/religious-freedom-synods-signature-issue>

Links:

- [1] <http://ncronline.org/node/20655>
- [2] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today>
- [3] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/beyond-exodus-christian-influx-middle-east>
- [4] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/pope-sketches-positive-secularism-middle-east>
- [5] <http://ncronline.org/node/20644>
- [6] <http://ncronline.org/node/20639/>