

## **GREEK ORTHODOX SOLIDARITY IN FACE OF CRUCIFIX BAN**

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The Greek Orthodox Church is urging Christians across Europe to oppose a ban on crucifixes in classrooms in Italy. The ban came as a result of a November 3 ruling by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in France that the presence of crucifixes violated a child's right to freedom of religion. The European Court of Human Rights found that the compulsory display of crucifixes violated parents' rights to educate their children as they saw fit and restricted the right of children to believe or not to believe. Immediately after the ruling, Vatican spokesman Rev. Federico Lombardi said the crucifix was a fundamental sign of the importance of religious values in Italian history and culture and was a symbol of unity and welcoming for all of humanity — not one of exclusion.

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