

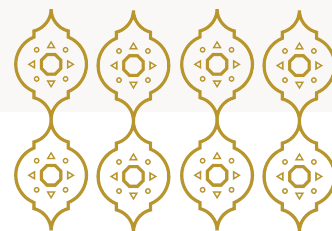


PHILOS CATHOLIC



MISSION

To promote Christian engagement in the Near East by fostering leaders and community in the Hebraic tradition. We are committed to Catholic-Jewish friendship, combating antisemitism, and supporting persecuted Christian communities, ensuring their cultural and religious heritage is preserved.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is Philos Catholic traditionalist or liberal?

Philos Catholic is neither. We are a Catholic movement faithful to Church teachings, emphasizing true unity within a diversity of charisms, and obedience to the Magisterium, inspired by recent Popes and Vatican II, particularly in fostering Jewish-Catholic relations.

Is Catholic antisemitism a problem?

Yes. Despite Church teachings condemning antisemitism, it unfortunately persists among some Catholics, manifesting as hostility toward Jews. Many Catholics remain unaware of what constitutes antisemitism, its dangers, and the need to embrace our common patrimony with the Jewish people.

What is antisemitism?

As Christians, we recognize antisemitism—hatred of the Jewish people—as a uniquely persistent and troubling form of hostility in human history. This distinctiveness arises from the unique mission given to the Jewish people, chosen by God from among all nations to fulfill a special role. Throughout history, this uniqueness is evident not only in their survival over thirty-five centuries but in their profound mission to bring monotheism, universal ethics, and mercy into a broken world. God, in His infinite wisdom, even chose to send His incarnate Son to dwell among the Jewish people.

Why should Catholics care about the Jewish people?

Catholics should cultivate a preferential love for Jews, honoring the deep bond we share through our faith. Jesus did not abolish the Old Covenant but fulfilled it (Matthew 5:17). As *Nostra Aetate* teaches echoing St. Paul, "God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers," and we are grafted into the rich root of Israel (Romans 11:17-18). Jesus Christ Himself, along with His family, St. Joseph and Our Lady, and the apostles and first disciples, were Jewish. The Jewish people are integral to the Church's spiritual identity and mission as Pope Pius XI wrote, "Spiritually, we are semites."

Does standing up for the Jewish people diminish our commitment to our own Catholic faith?

Standing up for the Jewish people in no way diminishes our commitment to our Catholic faith. We firmly believe, as the Church teaches, that salvation comes through Jesus Christ alone. Yet this conviction should inspire humility, not arrogance, toward the Jewish people, who hold a unique and ongoing role in God's plan of salvation. As St. Paul reminds us, we are called not to harbor pride or contempt but to approach the Jewish people with respect and reverence, recognizing their foundational role in salvation history. We do not adhere to a "dual covenant" theology that suggests separate paths to salvation, nor do we support "replacement theology" that dismisses Israel's significance. Instead, we honor our faith's roots in Judaism and gratefully acknowledge the Jewish people's special mission, which, even now, remains part of God's mysterious design.

Are you Catholic Zionists?

Zionism supports the Jewish people's right to self-determination in their ancestral homeland, affirming their right to a secure and democratic state. While opinions on Zionism vary among Catholics, supporting Jewish rights and opposing antisemitism is crucial. Zionism does not dictate a stance on Palestinian statehood but focuses on the Jewish right to live safely in Israel. Some may identify as Zionists, others may not. We affirm the right of the Jewish people to live safely and securely in their ancestral homeland and recognize that modern Israel is essential to that security. These rights should not jeopardize the right of Palestinians to also live in safety and security.

Do Christians in Israel have civil rights, and what is your position on Christians of the Near East?

Yes, Christians and other minorities in Israel enjoy equal rights, including voting, employment, and freedom of religion, just like all Israeli citizens. We also affirm the rights of Christians in the Near East to live and thrive as indigenous citizens, advocating for protections to preserve their culture, language, and religious rites and practices.

What is the relationship between the Biblical land of Israel and the modern state of Israel?

The Biblical land of Israel and the modern state of Israel share the same geography and the same people. For some Jews, the desire to return to this ancient homeland is deeply spiritual and religious, rooted in centuries of prayer and tradition. For others, the modern state represents a refuge—a place where Jewish people can live with the safety and security they have often been denied throughout history. Regardless of motivation, Jewish presence in the land has been continuous since the days of Joshua, making Israel not only a modern nation but a living connection to Biblical heritage.

What about the Palestinians?

We support both Jewish and Palestinian security and self-determination in the region. Both states should be democratic and pluralistic. We firmly oppose violence against both peoples.

Is it antisemitic to criticize Israel?

Criticizing Israel is not inherently antisemitic, but it can become so if it denies Jews' right to self-determination or holds Israel to a different standard than other nations. Too often, antisemites hide their hatred of the Jewish people behind anti-Zionism.