

## US YOUTH CAN PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO NATION "UNDER GOD"

SAN FRANCISCO, California, MARCH 12, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- An appeals court in California today ruled that the phrase "one nation under God" in the pledge of allegiance to the flag recited by school children does not violate separation of Church and state.

The supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus -- which led the 1950s campaign to add the words "under God" to the pledge -- hailed the decision as "a victory for common sense."

Carl Anderson said: "Today, the court got it absolutely right: Recitation of the pledge is a patriotic exercise, not a religious prayer. Best of all, the court said that the words 'under God' add a 'note of importance which a pledge to our nation ought to have and which in our culture ceremonial references to God arouse.'

"Every reasonable person knows that, and today's decision is a breath of fresh air from a court system that has too often seemed to be almost allergic to public references to God."

Defendants in the case included the Knights of Columbus, as well as individual knights, the U.S. government, and a California school district.

The court's 2-1 decision overturned its own 2002 ruling that sided with an atheist in claiming the reference to God in the pledge and the words "In God We Trust" on currency are a violation of church-state separation.