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# Synod Calls for Coexistence of Religions in Mideast

## Notes That Everyone Must Enjoy Same Rights

VATICAN CITY, MAY 27, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Religions must coexist in the Middle East, for the promotion of peace and collaboration in the common good, a Vatican group is affirming.

This statement came from a special council for the Middle East of the synod of bishops, which held a meeting May 17-18. A statement from the Vatican press office today reported on the meeting conclusions.

The special council is following up on the work of the Special Assembly for the Middle East, held last October.

Archbishop Nikola Eterović, secretary-general of the synod of bishops, presided over the meeting.

The participants reiterated the "grave responsibilities of local and international politicians, who must guarantee the same rights to all the citizens of the various ethnic, religious and cultural groups."

"The coexistence of religions is essential for the development of mutual knowledge and tolerance" the council members stressed. This coexistence is mandatory to "promote peaceful and fruitful relations in collaboration for the common good."

The members also noted "the increasingly demanding requirements of ecumenical and religious dialogue, which stimulate the search for communion and witness on the part of the Lord's disciples to live the faith in charity, with the hope for better times."

The council continued work on the texts from the October synod, in preparations for the apostolic exhortation that the Pope will provide as a fruit of the gathering.

The meeting ended with the members entrusting to the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary the fortune of the peoples of the Middle East.

A new meeting of a restricted group of writers has been called for July 6-7.