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STATEMENT

ARCHBISHOP JOHN C. WESTER SUPPORTS FRENCH BISHOPS' STATEMENT ON THE OLYMPICS' OPENING CEREMONY

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – Saturday, July 27, 2024 – IMMEDIATE RELEASE—Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, applauds the French Bishops' Conference (CEF) and the Holy Games project's response to the Olympic Games opening ceremony in Paris.

Wester says, "I join my brother bishops in France who have published the following statement in response to the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in Paris, which included 'scenes of mockery and derision of Christianity.'"

The [translated statement](#), obtained from X, reads:

In the run-up to the Paris Games, the Holy Games project, inspired by the Roman Catholic Church, has been mobilizing a large number of Catholics for almost three years to share the sporting and popular fervor surrounding this magnificent event organized by our country.

Last week, we were delighted to host the opening Mass of the Olympic truce in the presence of numerous religious, political, and sporting figures.

We believe that the values and principles expressed and disseminated by sport and Olympism contribute to the need for unity and fraternity that our world so desperately needs, while respecting everyone's convictions, around the sport that brings us together and promotes peace among nations and hearts.

Last night's opening ceremony, organized by French COJOP, offered the world a marvelous display of beauty and joy, rich in emotion and universally acclaimed.

This ceremony, unfortunately, included scenes of mockery and derision of Christianity, which we deeply regret. We would like to thank the members of other religious denominations who have expressed their solidarity with us.

This morning, we are thinking of all the Christians on every continent who have been hurt by the outrageousness and provocation of certain scenes. We want them to understand that the Olympic celebration goes far beyond the ideological biases of a few artists.

Sport is a wonderful human activity that deeply delights the hearts of athletes and spectators alike. Olympism is a movement at the service of this reality of human unity and fraternity. Now, it's time to take to the field, and may it bring truth, consolation, and joy to all!

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