



When our society denies dignity  
to men and women by excluding them,  
it denies its own dignity.



*Public statement by the Synods of  
the Reformed Church of France and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France.*

For the sake of their faith in God, who receives all human beings without distinction, and on the strength of the commitment of their members, the Lutheran and Reformed Churches of France affirm their solidarity with men, women and children who are marginalized and excluded. They find it a cause for concern that our society can so easily leave by the wayside the vulnerable (the sick, the old, the handicapped) and the unfortunate (the underpaid, foreigners without official status, the jobless, those whose relationships have broken down...). Along with others, these Churches try to translate this solidarity into practical terms in daily life, through the initiatives of their parishes and of the various organizations in the Protestant tradition.

Standing beside all those whose dignity has been trampled upon, they denounce the logic that would measure the value of human beings in terms of numbers – the extent of their assets, their expenditure or their cost to society. Recognizing the existence and the value of a basic interdependence between human beings, they express their adamant refusal of policies that encourage competition rather than cooperation, destroying so many human destinies. Against a background of economic crisis, they call on everyone to imagine new forms of solidarity and to resist the temptation to economize at the expense of the most vulnerable.

In the face of the temptation to gloss over questions of meaning, the Churches also affirm that it is necessary to take account of human persons as a whole – not only their physical, social, cultural and psychological aspects, but also the spiritual side. The Lutheran and Reformed Churches, while respecting the principle of secularity, are convinced that the Gospel of Jesus Christ can help “life's wounded” to get back on their feet; they advocate an approach that gives full weight to existential questions in social institutions, in particular through chaplaincies and spiritual support.

Our commitment is made for the sake of the Gospel; and for the sake of the Gospel we call on all to make the same commitment. The Gospel teaches that we cannot separate the love of God from the love of our neighbour; it invites us to recognize in each human person a being created in the image of God, worthy of love and capable of contributing to the building of our shared world.

*Joint statement adopted  
on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2010 by the national Synod of the Reformed Church of France meeting  
at La Force (Dordogne)  
and on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2010 by the general Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France meeting  
in Montbéliard (Doubs).*