

By [Judy Harrison](#), BDN Staff
Posted Oct. 31, 2013, at 11:02 a.m.

ALESSANDRO BIANCHI | REUTERS

Pope Francis waves as he leads a special audience with families at the St Peter Square in Vatican October 26, 2013.

BELFAST, Maine — Pax Christi Maine on Sunday passed a resolution urging the group’s national and international organization to call on Pope Francis to renounce the Doctrine of Discovery.

Last year, [the World Council of Churches endorsed a similar resolution](#) that began with the Episcopal Diocese of Maine. In March, the Onondaga Nation called on the pope to renounce the doctrine.

The Doctrine of Discovery was used to justify the subjugation of aboriginal people in the Americas and the dispossession of their lands by European sovereigns all over the world, Marilyn Roper, a member of the Houlton chapter of Pax Christi, said Thursday.

Pax Christi Maine “renounces the Doctrine of Discovery formulated in the papal bulls of the 15th century which legitimized the subjugation by Christian, European monarchs of indigenous peoples in North American and other parts of the globe, and the usurpation of their lands on the basis of their being non-Christian and ‘barbarous.’”

The resolution was brought to the state organization by the Houlton group.

The Maine resolution was “arguably the first Catholic non-native appeal for the renunciation of the Doctrine of Discovery,” Roper of Houlton said in a press release issued Wednesday.