
France: Bordeaux, 300 people, including 100 children, evicted from the banlieue. Condemnation of Catholic associations. “Everyone has the right to a home”

The Bordeaux Police have evicted 300 people, including more than 100 children, from the premises of a former nursing home illegally occupied since 2019 in the “Free Zone” of Cenon, a municipality in the banlieue of Bordeaux, France. The eviction was ordered by the prefect in virtue of the risks for the safety of the persons living within those old walls. On Thursday, 11 February, at 6:00am, numerous police officers arrived on the spot. For the whole day, they forced families out of their dwellings and marshalled them onto buses taking them to other areas of the department. Only 58 agreed to leave the city. The operation gave rise to great indignation. The national President of Secours Catholique, Véronique Fayet, firmly condemned the operation which was executed without any preparation and with “unheard of violence”. “People are not animals”, and a “cowboy” approach was used, especially with those children. “The operation took place in the depths of winter. What will happen to these families? At least they had a roof over their heads. Will they have it in the coming days?”, Archbishop Jean-Paul James commented in a statement. “How can we ignore the tragedy experienced” by these families and by those who “do not have a home in these times of cold and pandemic?”. “Every human being has the right to a roof”, the Archbishop stressed, and the “Catholic Church, through its associations, Catholic Action, Secours Catholique and migrant pastoral service, among others, will continue to strive for the dignity of every human person”.

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