

Brazilian bishops warn about political use of religion

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**Jair Bolsonaro (R) getting baptized in the Jordan River, August 28, 2020. | Photo: Twitter/
@BrianMteleSUR**

Brasilia, October 12 (RHC)-- The Episcopate of Brazil, in an open letter published this week, "vehemently" condemned the use of religion as a weapon in the electoral campaign prior to the second presidential

round to be held on October 30th.

These statements appeared a day before the visit of the far-right President Jair Bolsonaro to the Basilica of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida. The Catholic Church leadership lamented the "intensification of the exploitation of faith and religion as a way to capture votes," adding that "specifically religious moments cannot be used by candidates to present their campaign proposals and other election-related matters."

Religion in Brazil has been consolidated into a political instrument, mainly due to the proselytizing acts that Bolsonaro has carried out among evangelical churches, where he tries to find sympathizers through conservative proposals such as the rejection of gender rights.

The tweet reads: "Bolsonaro is booed for putting on 'a jet ski show' during a religious event, Cirio Fluvial."

During the first electoral round, Bolsonaro falsely affirmed that the Workers' Party presidential candidate Lula da Silva would close the churches if he wins the elections. Through social media, supporters of the far-right president have been also also permanently deploying fake news campaigns related to religious issues. Recently, Bolsonarist groups have accused Lula da Silva of signing pacts with Satan to reach the Presidency of the Republic.

Among such messages is a video recently posted by former artist Cassia Kis who invites Brazilians to wear clothes with the colors of the country's flag and pray the rosary on Our Lady of Aparecida's day so as to prevent the advent of communism prophesied in the scriptures.

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