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# THE SACRAMENTO BEE

## Senior rabbi warns of anti-Semitism's rise in Europe

25 Oct 2019 [+1 more](#) BY COLLEEN BARRY

The chief rabbi of the main Orthodox rabbinical alliance in Europe says that a resurgence of anti-Semitism on the continent “poses an existential threat to the Jewish community.”

The warning by Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmit was sounded as the Conference of European Rabbis awarded the Moshe Rosen Award on Thursday in Rome to the founder of the Catholic charity Sant’Egidio, Andrea Riccardi.

Goldschmidt said the award recognizes non-Jews who promote dialogue, understanding and tolerance to ensure a Jewish future in Europe, which he said: “I believe is at risk.”

Goldschmidt told The Associated Press that the receding memory of the Holocaust, rising far-right sentiment and radical Islam are the

key factors fueling the anti-Semitic climate.

An attack two weeks ago on a German synagogue was the latest violent manifestation of the trend, but also includes more subtly negative stereotypes and verbal expressions of cultural contempt.

“The last survivors and the last perpetrators are about to leave our world and the Holocaust is changing from being something that is living memory to being part of history,” Goldschmidt said. “Certainly, it is also the political turmoil in Europe today, which is unsettling all the agreements and values which were agreed in 1945, after World War II.”

Goldschmidt said a myriad of factors – ranging from attacks on Jews and encroachments on Jewish life like a Belgian law outlawing the

Kosher slaughter of animals – have made Europe less safe for Jews than 20 years ago.

During that period, the number of Jews in Europe has diminished, he said, from 2 million to 1.5 million today, largely through emigration.

Riccardi is being recognized for work by the

51-year Sant’Egidio community to construct a dialogue between lay Catholics and Jews, reaching beyond Vatican efforts to mend relations with Jews dating from the 1962 Second Vatican Council.

The Sant-Egidio community believes that preserving the memory of the Holocaust is critical to constructing a united Europe, and for the last 25 years has marched with the Jewish community on the an-





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niversary of the Oct.

16, 1943 deportation of Roman Jews to Nazi German death camps.

“Anti-Semitism is like a storm, at a certain point it explodes. We need to act at the first signs,” Riccardi said.

The Moshe Rosen award was named for the late chief rabbi of Romania who safeguarded his community during communism.

