



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

His Holiness Pope Francis
The Vatican

Your Holiness,

We at PETA and our many Christian members and supporters were deeply disturbed to see the terrible photographs and read the upsetting stories in the media which reveal that during the Mexican festival honouring Saint Anne, men tied up a bull, sliced open his throat, cut off his horns, and drank his blood while he was still alive, wide-eyed, and struggling. As compassionate people, we urge you to ensure that this vile and cruel event involving animal torture does not take place ever again.

Torturing a bull makes a mockery of Christ's clear teachings of mercy and compassion. Bulls, like humans and all animals, are, of course, God's creation, and each of them experiences pain, suffering, joy, and sorrow. Can you imagine their terror and agony as they are assaulted by shouting men, tormented, and slowly bled to death?

We are grateful that Your Holiness has previously spoken out strongly against exploiting and abusing animals, writing, "Every act of cruelty towards any creature is 'contrary to human dignity'". And we are also grateful that Your Holiness' predecessors have expressed similar sentiments. In a 2002 interview, when asked about the rights of animals, His Holiness Benedict XVI—then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger—stated, "That is a very serious question. At any rate, we can see that they are given into our care, that we cannot just do whatever we want with them. Animals, too, are God's creatures". And his predecessor, His Holiness John Paul II, declared that "animals possess a soul".

As the scriptures reflect, from the Garden of Eden to the visions of the prophets Isaiah, Amos, Micah, and others, in every instance, God's ideal is one in which animals are treated with compassion.

Tradition is not an excuse to abuse any living being. Holy Father, we urge you to end the church's participation in this cruelty and urge the community to honour Saint Anne through the many peaceful traditions that fill the festival without harming any of God's creatures.

Sincerely,



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TREATMENT OF ANIMALS (PETA)
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Registered in England and Wales
as charity number 1056453,
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