



8 May 2025

Your Holiness,

We welcome the news of your appointment to this sacred role. We look forward to another compassionate papacy. We know you have many things to do, and we pray that you will find it in your heart to follow Pope Francis' compassionate legacy by doing what he surely would have done had he had more time on Earth, and cut the Catholic Church's sacrilegious ties to the torture killing of bulls for entertainment that is a blot on the Church.

I'm sure you know that in predominantly Catholic countries, this hideously cruel blood sport continues, despite the fact that polls show that most people want to see it banned and survives in part because the Church permits its promoters to use the Church's and the saints' names. This torture of animals comes from a time when cruelty and disregard for life were the norm — when people were executed in public squares to the applause of roaring crowds. Today, that same thirst for blood comes at the expense of bulls, who are tormented, injured, and slowly killed. And most shockingly, thousands of Catholic festivals still involve tormenting animals, and the Church profits from it. In some places, priests even enter the bullring themselves, dressed in their sacred cassocks, to torment frightened young bulls. This is a scandal and a sacrilege.

Animals are God's creation of course. Yet each bull used for fighting suffers greatly, being speared and stabbed again and again until, exhausted, he is finally killed and another takes his place. It is not uncommon for the bulls to die from drowning in their own blood. They look up at the crowd and at the matadors (murderers) who taunt them, as if pleading for mercy. But none comes. Instead, their suffering is turned into a mockery of Christ's teachings of compassion and kindness.

The Church must choose where it stands: with the vulnerable, or with those who harm them. Please do not allow it to continue to support a practice that every kind person rejects. Please be a guide — especially for young people — towards a more just and merciful society. The Church knows well that not all traditions should be preserved. If we are to build a better future, some things must be rejected.

Your Holiness, will you please speak out against this cruel injustice currently carried out with the Church's protection soon?

With hope and sincerity,



Ingrid Newkirk

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