

Arms Dealers Must Take Responsibility for Atrocities Like Brussels



Pope Francis labels those that sell guns and weapons as 'modern day Judases' in Holy Thursday liturgy. Arms dealers must take responsibility for atrocities like Brussels, Pope says. Pope Francis said arms dealers are modern day Judases and must take their share of responsibility for the Brussels terrorist attacks this week.

In a moving Holy Thursday liturgy, in which he washed the feet of twelve asylum seekers, the Pope contrasted Jesus washing the feet of his disciples with that of Judas who betrayed Jesus for money.

During his homily for the Mass for the Last Supper, Francis likened Judas' betrayal to those "behind" Brussels terror attacks on Tuesday which killed 31 and injured 270. The betrayers, he said, "are manufacturers, arms dealers who want blood, not peace; they want war, not brotherhood."

The liturgy, which begins the Easter Triduum of Holy Week, took place at the Castelnuovo di Porto, a centre which helps asylum seekers and is located 16 miles north of Rome. It took place in front of almost 900 refugees from 25 countries with the Pope washing the feet of eight men and four women.

"We are different, we have different cultures and religions, but we are brothers and we want to live in peace," Francis said during his homily. "Muslims, Hindus, Catholics, Copts, Evangelicals but all brothers and children of the same God: we want to live together in peace."

Among those who had their feet washed were four Nigerian Catholics, three Eritreans who are Coptic Christians, three Muslims, a Hindu and an Italian. Many were visibly moved when the Pope washed and kissed each of their feet.

The Pope said: "May each one of us in our own religious language, beg the Lord that this brotherhood

be contagious in the world, so that there are not 30 coins to kill our brother, so that there will always be brotherhood and goodness."

This is the first Holy Thursday since Francis' liturgical changes were made to allow priests to wash the feet of both men and woman during the ritual, which recalls Jesus' washing of his disciples feet.

The Pope has, however, washed the feet of females in the past on previous Holy Thursdays, including those of a Muslim woman.

Earlier in the day 200 chocolate eggs arrived as presents from the Pope to the centre, known as CARA. Francis also donated a small amount of money to each of the 892 guests while after the Mass he greeted each of them individually.

Those staying at the centre are all applying for asylum in Europe and living at CARA while their applications are being processed.

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