

Raul Castro thanks Pope Francis for brokering Cuba-US deal

11/05/2015



Cuban President Raul Castro has praised Pope Francis for brokering the restoration of relations between Cuba and the US, announced in December.

At the end of an audience at the Vatican, Mr Castro said he had thanked the Pope for his contribution for the historic rapprochement.

Secret negotiations to put an end to more than five decades of hostilities were carried out inside the Vatican.

The Pope will [visit Cuba](#) on his way to the US in September.

"I am very happy. I have come here to thank him for what he has done to begin solving the problems of the United States and Cuba," said Mr Castro.

The communist leader had stopped at the Vatican after attending Russia's World War Two Victory Day in Moscow.

After the audience with the Pope, Mr Castro said he was so impressed by a Vatican audience with Pope Francis that he might return to the faith he was born into.

Mr Castro praised the pontiff's wisdom, adding: "I will resume praying and turn to the Church again if the Pope continues in this vein."

The Catholic Church has maintained ties with Havana since the 1959 revolution.