
Pope Francis Meets With Fidel Castro in Cuba

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Pope Francis presided over a mass in Havana's Plaza of the Revolution earlier in the day.

The Vatican confirmed Sunday that Pope Francis held a private meeting with Fidel Castro, the former president and historic leader of the Cuban Revolution.

Officials reported that the meeting was held shortly after the conclusion of the pontiff's mass in front of thousands at the Plaza of the Revolution in the capital of Havana.

The spokesperson for the Vatican, Federico Lombardi told a press conference that the meeting lasted approximately 40 minutes and was "friendly" and "informal." He further reported that the pair were joined by 10 people, including members of Fidel Castro's family.

According to sources, the pair exchanged books Fidel Castro reportedly gave the pope a book entitled, "Fidel and Religion," which is based on discussions between the leader of the Cuban Revolution and noted Liberation Theologist Frei Betto, who attended Sunday's mass in Havana.

The book was inscribed with the dedication, "For Pope Francis during his fraternal visit, with admiration and respect from the Cuban people."

The pope gave Fidel Castro two books by Alessandro Pronzato and an audiobook by Armando Llorente, a jesuit priest who served as Fidel's tutor as a youth at Belen Jesuit School in Havana.

Pope Francis is expected to meet with President Raul Castro in the Palace of the Revolution at 4 p.m. local time.

The pontiff is in

