
Pope Tells US Congress to End Death Penalty, Accept Refugees

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Pope Francis addressed the United States Congress Thursday, calling on lawmakers in the majority-Republican U.S. Congress to abolish the death penalty, to welcome refugees and end the armed conflict that are fueled by weapons sales and money.

Most of Republican lawmakers oppose the pope on these issues as many of them support armed solution to global conflicts, while opposing abolishing the death penalty and taking in refugees.

Being at the service of dialogue and peace also means being truly determined to minimize and, in the long term, to end the many armed conflicts throughout our world," the pope told the U.S. Congress, as part of his six-day visit to the country.

Here we have to ask ourselves: Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society? Sadly, the answer, as we all know, is simply for money: money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade."

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The head of the Catholic Church also called on the congress to implement strategies to end poverty and help fellow human by wealth distribution and proper use of natural resources and technologies.

It goes without saying that part of this great effort is the creation and distribution of wealth. The right use of natural resources, the proper application of technology and the harnessing of the spirit of enterprise are essential elements of an economy which seeks to be modern, inclusive and sustainable."

He touched on the subject of climate change, which many in the U.S. congress deny its existence, as he called for responsible effort to "redirect our steps" in order to avoid the most serious effects of the environmental deterioration caused by human activity".

Calling himself "the son of immigrants" from Italy who settled in Argentina last century, the pope called on the U.S. to accept more refugees from around the world as many are trying to build a better future" for themselves across the world.

"We must not be taken aback by their numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation. To respond in a way which is always humane, just and fraternal," he said.

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