



## **Pope Francis met ecclesiastical and state dignitaries in the Museum of Fine Arts**

**Pope Francis arrived at Budapest's Liszt Ferenc International airport on Sunday morning. Prior to the Statio Orbis in the Museum of Fine Arts, the Holy Father met ecclesiastical and state dignitaries, including János Áder, President of the Republic of Hungary, and Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary. Following the meeting Pope Francis met members of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Ecumenical Council of the Hungarian Churches, as well as the delegation of the Hungarian Jewish organizations.**

The Head of the Catholic Church was greeted on behalf of the Ecumenical Council of the Hungarian Churches by József Steinbach, Bishop of the Reformed Church in Hungary, saying that each Eucharist, each thanksgiving "in fact is a real thanksgiving before God's gift, for the redeeming Jesus Christ, the only, unutterable, and inconceivable by the human mind; a thanksgiving for the love, with which God loved the world so greatly that he gave his only begotten Son for; and for everyone, believing in Him should not get lost, but should have an eternal life." This gift obliges us to present each other with this divine love – added the bishop. He outlined that the Pontiff's visit "strengthens us in God's unutterable gift, in Jesus Christ, in our Christian faith and in our Christian ministry."

The Ecumenical Council of the Hungarian Churches presented to the Holy Father with the facsimile edition of the Vizsoly Bible, the first Bible printed in the Hungarian language.

Greeting words of Robert Frölich, Hungarian Chief Rabbi was interpreted by Zoltán Radnóti Chief Rabbi. "The two great monotheistic religions, with teachings of two thousand years, and with messages still valid today meet in these moments" – he said. The common faith heritage of Judaism and Christianity "enlightens the present, and serves as navigational light for the common future of mankind." – added the Chief Rabbi, outlining the work done during the recent years by both Jewish and Christian people "so to make the dividing walls, burdened with troublesome past, fall down definitively." The Chief Rabbi also said in his welcome speech: "the hope of today's historical meeting is that we return from our path and further live together, Jewish and Christian people in a mutual respect towards each other in human understanding and in a true brotherly love."

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The Jewish communities presented the Holy Father with a silver Torah pointer.

Following the meetings the Holy Father, accompanied by Cardinal Péter Erdő toured around the nearby streets on the pope-mobil to greet the crowd of faithful, ending his ride at Heroes' Square, at the venue of the papal Holy Mass.

At the airport Pope Francis was welcomed amidst a military parade by the Apostolic Nuncio to Hungary, Archbishop Michael Blume, by Cardinal Péter Erdő, Archbishop of the Esztergom-Budapest Archdiocese and by András Veres, President of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference.