



World Jewish Congress delegation received by Pope Francis on Rosh Hashana eve

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Pope Francis on Wednesday evening, Sept. 17, received a delegation of 40 international Jewish leaders at his residence, ahead of Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, which begins next week. The presidents of the World Jewish Congress, Ronald S. Lauder, and of the Latin American Jewish Congress, Jack Terpins, presented the head of the Catholic Church with a number of gifts, including a traditional honey cake.

During their conversation, the Pope notably raised the question of the persecution and mass slaughter of Christians in the Middle East and told the Jewish delegation: "Like you [the Jews] suffered in the past, Christians are today suffering in many parts of the world."

The meeting with Francis took place in the Santa Marta guesthouse in an informal setting and lasted 40 minutes. Among the participants were many Jewish community heads from Latin America and other parts of the world.

The Pope expressed his desire for peace in the Middle East and said the "window of prayer" to find a peaceful solution was still open. Lauder also raised the subject of the mass slaughter and persecution of Christians in the Middle East, to which the Pope replied: "Christians are being expelled from the region. They are persecuted, not liked, discriminated against. You [the Jews] suffered from that in the past, and we [the Christians] are suffering from it today in parts of the world."

Source: [World Jewish Congress](#)