

## MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE AND HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS



Photograph of the Japan-His Holiness Pope Francis Meeting

On November 25, 2019, Prime Minister Abe met with His Holiness Pope Francis during his Apostolic Visit to Japan. After this meeting, “Meeting with Authorities and the Diplomatic Corps” was held.

In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Abe said:

“I welcome Your Holiness Pope Francis to Japan. I understand that Your Holiness has wanted to visit Japan for a very long time, and I am happy that after 38 years, an Apostolic Visit was able to be realized. While I was fortunate to meet Your Holiness Pope Francis when I visited Vatican in 2014, it is an especially great honor to welcome Your Holiness to the Prime Minister’s Office today.” Prime Minister Abe continued that “Japan and Vatican are partners that emphasize the importance of peace, the realization of a “World without Nuclear Weapons,” the eradication of poverty, human rights and the environment. With Your Holiness’s visit to Japan as a starting point, I want to expand our cooperation with the Vatican.”

His Holiness Pope Francis expressed his happiness at having the opportunity to visit Japan, stating that he intends to strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

Prime Minister Abe thanked His Holiness Pope Francis for his congratulatory message regarding the Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor. Also, the Prime Minister Abe stated that “I am grateful for the warm message of His Holiness on the third anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake, as well as

for His Holiness’s encouragement at his meeting this morning with afflicted people by the disaster.”

Touching upon the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Nagasaki and Hiroshima, Prime Minister Abe said “Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombs, has a duty to lead the effort of international community to realize a ‘World without Nuclear Weapons.’” Prime Minister Abe continued with his determination that “we will tenaciously endeavor to realize a “World without Nuclear Weapons” with maintaining the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, deepening understanding of the reality of atomic bombs, and making an effort to take a bridging role between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states.”

In response, His Holiness Pope Francis welcomed Japan’s efforts and expressed support for Japan’s determination.

Prime Minister Abe and His Holiness Pope Francis exchanged views on regional affairs, especially on the current situation in North Korea. Prime Minister Abe sought understanding and support for an immediate resolution to the abductions issue, and obtained His Holiness Pope Francis’ support.

Prime Minister Abe presented His Holiness Pope Francis with a digital camera and a rosary. His Holiness Pope Francis gave Prime Minister Abe a triptych of gold, silver, and bronze medals and a set of books.



Photograph of Meeting with Authorities and the Diplomatic Corps