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Zelenskyy and Trump

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, right, and U.S. President Donald Trump, talk before the funeral of Pope Francis in Vatican April 26.(OSV News/Ukrainian Presidential Press Office, via Reuters)

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U.S. President Donald Trump met for about 15 minutes with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy inside St. Peter's Basilica before Pope Francis' funeral service in St. Peter's Square Saturday. Photos showed them seated on chairs facing one another, hunched over, in the basilica's marbled nave.

After Trump was shown to his seat for the funeral, he was immediately followed out of the basilica by Zelenskyy, who was met with a burst of applause from the audience. It was their first face-to-face encounter since they argued during a heated Oval Office meeting in late February. Trump has been trying to broker an end to the war in Ukraine that began in February 2022 when Russia invaded.

"Good meeting," Zelynskyy tweeted. "We discussed a lot one on one. Hoping for results on everything we covered. Protecting lives of our people. Full and unconditional ceasefire."

Trump occupied a front-row seat in sunlit St. Peter's Square as more than 50 heads of state and other dignitaries attended the funeral of the Catholic Church leader who pointedly disagreed with the American on a variety of issues.

Trump and first lady Melania Trump were seated next to Estonian President Alar Karis and not far from French President Emmanuel Macron for the outdoor service on a cloudless morning.

Trump stood out at the funeral service in a dark blue suit and a lighter blue tie in a sea of mournful black attire. The first lady, who is Catholic, wore a black dress and veil. Trump considers himself a "nondenominational Christian." The couple paid respects to the late pope in front of his wooden coffin.

During the service, the Trumps held hands at times and the president kissed his wife on the cheek during the Sign of Peace. They also visited with Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York while at the Vatican.

Trump told reporters on Friday as he flew to Rome that he was going to the funeral "out of respect" for Francis, who died Monday at age 88.

Francis sharply disagreed with Trump's approach on issues including immigration, the treatment of migrants and climate change. The Argentine pontiff and the American president sparred early in their relationship over immigration. In 2016, Francis, alluding to then-candidate Trump and his campaign slogan of "build the wall," called anyone who builds a wall to keep out migrants "not Christian." Trump said the comment was “disgraceful.”

But after Francis' death, the Republican president praised him as a "good man" who "worked hard" and "loved the world." Trump also described the pope as a "fantastic kind of guy."

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Seated a few rows back behind the Trumps at the funeral service were former Democratic President Joe Biden, a practicing Catholic, and his wife, Jill. When Trump was asked earlier if he would meet his predecessor while in Italy, he told reporters:

"It’s not high on my list. It’s really not."

Trump had spoken in recent days about holding multiple meetings with world leaders while in Rome but that did not appear to pan out during his brief visit. Trump arrived late Friday and was en route back to the United States immediately after the funeral.

This story appears in the **Trump's Second Term** and **The Funeral of Pope Francis** feature series.