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Francis offers support to Mothers of Plaza de Mayo

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In a move full of significance in and beyond Argentina, Pope Francis has expressed his deep appreciation for the work and dedication of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo.

"The Holy Father shares your sorrow, and that of the many mothers and families who have and are suffering the tragic loss of their loved ones at this moment in Argentina's history," the letter signed by a Vatican official reads.

"His Holiness appreciates and highly esteems those who are close to the most disadvantaged and who make the effort to assist them, understand them, and meet their aspirations," Msgr. Antoine Camilleri, under-secretary for the Holy See's Relations with States, wrote.

"In his prayers, he also asks that those responsible for the common good be enlightened so that they might fight the scourge of poverty with effective, equitable, and caring means."

The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo is an association of Argentinian mothers created in 1977 to denounce the disappearance of their children during the time of the Military Junta that controlled Argentina from 1976 to 1983. The military has admitted that over 9,000 of those kidnapped are still unaccounted for, but the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo say that the number is closer to 30,000.

Since 1977 the women have assembled every Thursday in the Plaza de Mayo in front of the Casa Rosada (the "Pink House," seat of the Argentinian government) to protest for the crimes committed during that era.

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