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Francis letter to Italian newspaper on Vatican website

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The Francis Chronicles

The full text of a letter by Pope Francis to Dr. Eugenio Scalfari, a journalist at the Italian newspaper, *La Repubblica*, has been published on the Vatican website:

In the letter, Francis makes three major points, as originally reported by NCR's John Allen.

- God has never abandoned the covenant with the Jewish people, and the church "can never be grateful enough" to the Jews for preserving their faith despite the horrors of history, especially the Shoah, the Hebrew word for the Holocaust.
- God's mercy "does not have limits" and therefore it reaches nonbelievers, too, for whom sin would not be the lack of faith in God, but rather, failure to obey one's conscience.
- Truth is not "variable or subjective," but Francis says he avoids calling it "absolute" -- truth possesses us, he said, not the other way around, and it's always expressed according to someone's "history and culture, the situation in which they live, etc."

The letter caused a sensation last week in Italy and elsewhere. It is highly unusual, and perhaps unprecedented, for a pope to respond to questions put time him in newspaper editorials.

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