



December 24, 2014

His Holiness Pope Francis I  
The Vatican

Your Holiness,

As the director of Christian outreach and engagement for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) as well as a follower of Jesus, I'm writing on behalf of our more than 3 million members and supporters to wish you a happy Advent season. We are sending you this vegan holiday ham—a meat-free meal that no one had to die for—in honor of your compassionate advocacy for *all* God's creatures.

We can't think of a better way to celebrate our Lord's incarnational birth, which is what this holiday season is centered upon, and hope for all of His creation than with a vegan meal.

Last year, during your first Christmas as the Bishop of Rome, you expressed so poignantly what the holiday meant to you by saying, "For me, Christmas is hope and tenderness." We pray that everyone extends hope and tenderness to God's creatures who are suffering today and every day on crowded factory farms, in freezing-cold transport trucks, and in terrifying slaughterhouses all over the world. We're sure you know, though many do not, that animals raised for food are castrated, branded with hot irons, debeaked with a searing-hot blade, dehorned in extremely traumatic ways, and more—all without any painkillers. At slaughterhouses, animals are shackled and their throats are cut, often while they're still conscious. Many will never have felt the warmth of the sun, formed friendships, roamed free, or done any of the other things that God intended for them.

By celebrating a cruelty-free Christmas, you will be sending a loving message to Christ's followers around the world about our role as faithful and merciful stewards of God's creatures. Thank you for your service to the Kingdom of God.

Respectfully yours,

Sarah Withrow King  
Director of Christian Outreach and Engagement  
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