



# PETA

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

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His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI

Via fax: 011 39 066 988 5378

Your Holiness,

On behalf of our 800,000 members, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals offers our warmest congratulations on this important day. We join millions around the world in wishing you good fortune. We hope, too, that as you extend compassion to people of all faiths, you will continue to think of animals as well.

Just three years ago, you spoke movingly of animals' plight when you spoke directly about animal rights, saying, "[W]e can see that they are given into our care, that we cannot just do whatever we want with them. Animals, too, are God's creatures, and even if they do not have the same direct relation to God that man has, they are still creatures of His will, creatures we must respect as companions in creation and as important elements in the creation." You went on to say that "a sort of industrial use of creatures, so that geese are fed in such a way as to produce as large a liver as possible, or hens live so packed together that they become just caricatures of birds, this degrading of living creatures to a commodity seems to me in fact to contradict the relationship of mutuality that comes across in the Bible."

We hope that you will continue to speak out for these exploited beings. In recent years, our membership has swelled with those who believe that animals, like people, have a sacred right to life and need to be protected from violence. Sadly, today's horrific factory farms deny animals all that God meant them to enjoy. They are treated as mere machines, crammed into cages so small that they cannot turn around or spread a wing and kept in conditions so filthy that they are pumped full of antibiotics just to keep them alive.

As a Catholic who tries to honor all of God's creation every day, I most respectfully ask for your support in our efforts to reduce the suffering of animals used for food. Would you please encourage people to consider the suffering of animals by lending a supportive word to our efforts?

As St. Francis said, "All creatures are created from the same paternal heartbeat of God. Not to hurt our humble brethren is our first duty to them, but to stop here is not enough. We have a higher mission—to be of service to them wherever they require it." We turn to you now, as you take on your momentous duties, and humbly ask that you lead the way into a new era of compassion and respect for all beings, regardless of species.

Yours in Christ,

Bruce Friedrich  
Director

AN INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATION DEDICATED  
TO PROTECTING  
THE RIGHTS OF ALL ANIMALS