

Feet on the Ground, Eyes on the Sky



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By Roberto Morejón

Like many people around the world, Cubans expressed their respect for Pope Francis, who passed away at the age of 88 after a long career of service to the Catholic Church and dedication to those most in need of care.

Paying close attention to the pronouncements of the Supreme Pontiff, Cubans recalled his two visits to this Caribbean archipelago, during which he left a trail of admiration and received the deserved tribute from the faithful.

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Later, in 2016, the Holy Father made a brief stop in Havana on his way to Mexico and met with Patriarch Kirill I, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

Both parties appreciated the hospitality of this capital city for hosting the first meeting between the leader of the Catholic Church and the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church since their schism.

The people of José Martí's homeland recognized in the recently deceased Catholic leader his words of affection: "I love the Cuban people very much; Cuba is a symbol."

His inclination toward the underprivileged is well known, as former Uruguayan President José Mujica expressed, calling Pope Francis "the best Christian version of addressing inequalities."

Austere in his lifestyle, he was concerned about the harms derived from certain modernizations, such as when he lamented seeing young people spending long hours on their phones, noting that when you look at their faces, they don't smile.

For Pope Francis, there were profound concerns, such as the idea that the recovery of the global economy cannot come at the expense of an impoverished majority losing as always, while an increasingly enriched minority gains as never before.

He urged people to think about women fleeing hunger or wars and was persistent in his references to climate change, stating that these transformations are becoming increasingly evident.

A staunch critic of those who stigmatize migrants, he addressed the deportations under Donald Trump's administration, though ironically, the last politician he met with was U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance.

Opposed to those who sow the seeds of war, the former Archbishop of Buenos Aires leaves behind a legacy of peace, which will endure and inspire those who advocate for dialogue and conflict resolution.

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