

# Pope Francis meets a group of transplant surgeons; including the mayor of Rome

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(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis met on Friday morning with the mayor of Rome, Ignazio Marino, who was accompanied by a group of surgeons who specialize in organ transplants. The mayor is a transplant surgeon himself, and trained at the Transplant Centre of the University of Cambridge and the University of Pittsburgh's Starzl Transplantation Institute.

The surgeons are among a group who are fighting the commercial exploitation of human organs. Each year, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates thousands of organs are transplanted illicitly across the world.

“This is a world-wide problem,” Marino told journalists after the meeting. “And in recent years it has grown exponentially, because it is a phenomenon which takes advantage of poverty.”

Marino said there are areas of the world where a person can sell one of their organs for a few hundred Euro, which will later be sold for tens of thousands, or more.

No statement was released by the Holy See Press Office after the meeting with the Holy Father, but Marino spoke about his conversation with Pope Francis.

“The Pope did not mince his words,” Marino told journalists. “He has authorized us to say publicly that we need to encourage the donation of organs out of compassion, but the trade in organs is immoral and a crime against humanity.”