



April 11, 2026

To His Holiness
The Supreme Pontiff
Apostolic Palace
00120 Vatican City

Most Holy Father,

With filial respect and deep reverence, the Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN) writes as you begin your Apostolic Journey to Africa. Your visit is a profound sign of hope for a continent facing serious challenges, yet sustained by enduring faith and resilience. We also pray that your presence will help reveal Africa to the world as a place not only of struggle, but of great hope, strength, and possibility.

AFJN, a Catholic advocacy community based in Washington, DC, is committed to promoting just U.S.–Africa relations. Guided by the Gospel and the Church’s social teaching, we respectfully bring to your attention some urgent concerns affecting the communities we accompany.

Cameroon: Human dignity amid conflict

As you visit Cameroon, particularly the Northwest and Southwest regions, we draw your attention to the ongoing Anglophone crisis—rooted in longstanding political, linguistic, and legal marginalization—which has escalated into violent conflict between state forces and armed separatist groups. This crisis has led to widespread displacement, loss of life, and the breakdown of essential civil systems. Within this fragile context, our collaboration with Church partners has revealed a deepening “crisis of identity,” as many Cameroonian children, lacking birth certificates, are effectively rendered stateless and excluded from education, healthcare, and civic life. We humbly ask Your Holiness to publicly call for an immediate ceasefire and inclusive dialogue, to encourage the Church to expand civil documentation efforts, and to advocate for the restoration of transparent and accountable institutions that safeguard identity, dignity, and the full participation of all.

Critical minerals and the common good

Africa’s vast mineral wealth too often fails to benefit its own people. As the world turns its attention to critical minerals, Africa has become even more susceptible to conflict due to its rich mineral deposits. At the same time, the curtailing of international aid has placed additional strain on already vulnerable communities, making it all the more urgent that these resources serve local populations. In keeping with the Church’s teaching that the goods of the earth are destined for all, we ask Your Holiness to advocate for fair and transparent mining agreements, to support global standards that ensure local communities benefit directly from extraction, and to call on wealthier nations and corporations to uphold justice over profit in resource governance.

Democratic Republic of Congo: Violence and exploitation

In eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly in Ituri and the Kivu regions, communities continue to endure immense suffering, with millions displaced and countless lives lost. Persistent violence—including attacks by armed groups—remains tied to deeper patterns of instability and the global demand for critical minerals. As you remind us in *Fratelli Tutti*, “every war leaves our world worse than it was before.” We humbly ask Your Holiness to call for greater international accountability for external actors, to urge stronger protections for civilians, and to press for ethical global supply chains that do not fuel conflict.

Vaccine equity and global solidarity

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed deep inequalities in access to life-saving vaccines across Africa and the Global South. Beyond access, limited sharing of knowledge and production capacity has left many nations dependent and vulnerable. We humbly ask Your Holiness to continue urging governments and pharmaceutical companies to share technology and knowledge more equitably, to support local manufacturing capacity in Africa, and to promote a global ethic of solidarity in healthcare access.

Most Holy Father, we entrust these concerns to your pastoral care. May your journey be a “field hospital” for the suffering and a prophetic witness to justice, while also lifting up before the world the enduring hope and resilience of the African people.

With the assurance of our highest respect and prayers in Christ,

Steven Nabieu Rogers, PhD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by 'NR' and a large loop.

Executive Director
Africa Faith and Justice Network

Africa Faith and Justice Network Member Organizations:

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