



Pope Celebrates Memorial Mass for Iraqi Assyrian Catholic Archbishop

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VATICAN CITY (AP) -- Pope Benedict XVI urged Iraqi Christians today to find the strength to keep working for a peaceful future after the death of the kidnapped Chaldean Catholic archbishop of Mosul.

Benedict celebrated a memorial Mass in a Vatican chapel in honor of Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho. His body was found last week near the northern city of Mosul, weeks after he was abducted.

Benedict has called Rahho's death an "inhuman act of violence" that offended human dignity.

In his homily Monday, Benedict called Rahho a man of peace and dialogue who paid particular attention to the poor and handicapped in his flock.

"Let his example support all Iraqis of good will -- Christians and Muslims -- to work for a peaceful coexistence, founded on human brotherhood and reciprocal respect," Benedict said.

Benedict has consistently criticized attacks against Iraqi Christians by Islamic extremists, and Rahho's death appears to have had a strong impact on him. On Sunday, in denouncing the death and the 5-year-old Iraq war, Benedict issued one of his strongest appeals for peace yet.

"Enough with the slaughters. Enough with the violence. Enough with the hatred in Iraq!" Benedict said to applause at the end of Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square.

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