

What Pope Francis Thinks About Donald Trump's Christianity

While aboard his papal plane, returning from his visit to Mexico, Pope Francis was asked to expand on his comments directed at Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump.

Wednesday, the pontiff held Mass on the U.S. border, where he railed against immigration policies that he said force many underground and into the hands of drug gangs and human smugglers. He was particularly critical of Trump, who has advocated building a wall along the border.

On his plane trip back to The Vatican, Francis expressed an even deeper critique, questioning the presidential candidate's Christianity.

"A person who thinks only about building walls, wherever they may be, and not building bridges, is not Christian," the pontiff said. "This is not in the gospel."

Francis didn't mention other Republican candidates who have also advocated stricter border security. When asked if he would direct American Catholics not to vote for the businessman-turned-Republican-presidential-front-runner, the Pope stopped short.

"I am not going to get involved in that," he said. "I say only that this man is not Christian if he has said things like that. We must see if he said things in that way and in this I give the benefit of the doubt."

It didn't take long for Trump to respond. In a statement that carried his signature, the Republican candidate said the Pope had been misled by Mexican authorities who do not want to have

to deal with him, should he be elected president.

"The Pope only heard one side of the story," he said. "He didn't see the crime, the drug trafficking and the negative economic impact the current policies have on the United States. He doesn't see how Mexican leadership is outsmarting President Obama and our leadership in every aspect of negotiation."

Trump said it was "disgraceful" for a religious leader to question a person's faith. He said he was "proud to be a Christian," and as president, he would not allow Christianity to be "consistently attacked and weakened" as is happening today in America.

"No leader, especially a religious leader, should have the right to question another man's religion or faith," he said. "They are using the Pope as a pawn and they should be ashamed of themselves for doing so, especially when so many lives are involved and when illegal immigration is so rampant."

Trump added Francis may someday wish Trump were the American president.

"If and when the Vatican is attacked by ISIS, which as everyone knows is ISIS' ultimate trophy, I can promise you that the Pope would have only wished and prayed that Donald Trump would have been president because this would not have happened," he said. "ISIS would have been eradicated unlike what is happening now with our all talk, no action politicians."