

PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

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His Eminence, Cardinal Mykola Bychok  
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church  
Melbourne, Australia

**18 June 2025**

Your Eminence:

I hope this finds you well. I'm writing from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) to appeal to your famed compassion and ask you to urge Australians not to attend the violent San Fermín Festival in Pamplona.

Each year, groups of Australians (especially young men) fly to Spain to run with the bulls and attend bullfights. Both activities are un-Christian, even though the festival is honouring a Catholic saint. The Running of the Bulls sees panicked bulls slip on cobblestone streets as they're chased and poked by jeering crowds. The bulls are then corralled into the bullring, where they're held for the evening bullfights. Unbeknownst to many run participants, these fights will end in a violent death for every single bull.

The bullfights that follow are bloody spectacles that inflict pain and trauma on God's creatures. As far back as the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, Pope St Pius V decreed that bullfights are "removed from Christian piety and charity" and denounced them as "cruel and base spectacles of the devil and not of man". Given that each bull used for fighting is repeatedly speared and stabbed until the exhausted animal is killed by a sword to the heart or his spine is cut with a dagger, it does not take much reflection to see that he was right.

Scripture is full of calls for us to be merciful, yet there is nothing loving or compassionate about allowing bulls to endure a slow, terrifying, and agonising death. Bullfighting dates back to when people knew nothing of animals' emotions, but today, we recognise that animals feel pain and fear, and we must act accordingly.

In *Laudato Si'*, His Holiness Pope Francis wrote that "every act of cruelty towards any creature is 'contrary to human dignity'". The majority of Spanish people oppose bullfighting, but tourists help to keep the industry alive. We implore Your Eminence to use your influence and speak out for the animals whose cries go unheard by urging young Australians to stay away from these cruel spectacles.

Yours faithfully,

Mimi Bekhechi  
Senior Campaigns Advisor

## Entities

- PETA US
- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)