



12 – CHOOSING PETS OVER CHILDREN IS 'SELFISH' - SAYS POPE



The Pope has suggested that people who choose to have pets instead of children were acting selfishly. Pope Francis was addressing worshippers in Rome. He told his audience that substituting children for pets was a "denial of fatherhood and motherhood". He added: "Today, we see a form of selfishness. We see that some people do not want to have a child. Sometimes they have just one, and that's it, but they have dogs and cats that take the place of children." Pope Francis encouraged couples to adopt children. He said: "We must not be afraid to choose the path of adoption, to take the risk of welcoming children. Having a child is always a risk, but there is more risk in not having a child."

It is not the first time Pope Francis has spoken out on this topic. In 2014, he said choosing pets over children was detrimental to our future. He called it a "phenomenon of cultural degradation". He commented that the emotional relationship with pets was "easier" than the "complex" relationship with children. In continuing this theme, he called the downward trend in birth rates across many countries a "demographic winter". Not everyone agrees with the Pope's comments. The New York Post pointed out the contradiction of Francis taking his name from St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. It added: "Dogs make us more human. They make us better. Dogs, I think, are superior to most people."