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Assisi touches Francis who calls for less worldly church

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The Francis Chronicles

Pontiff Francis reportedly spoke with emotion yesterday, calling for greater compassion and concern for the needy of the world. He did this as he called for a less worldly and more humble church.

Francis said all members of the church, including bishops, cardinals and the pope himself, had to avoid the pitfalls of attaching importance to worldly things and to be more humble.

"Worldliness brings us to vanity, arrogance, pride and these are idols ? All of us have to strip ourselves of this worldliness," he said.

Francis was reported as being visibly moved when he heard the stories of some of the poor people in the room. "Many of you have been stripped by this savage world that does not give employment, that does not help, that does not care if there are children in the world who are dying of hunger, does not care if so many families have nothing to eat," he said.

He decried a world "that does not care about many people who have to flee poverty and hunger, flee seeking freedom and many times they find death, as happened yesterday in Lampedusa".

Francis was referring to the sinking of a migrant boat off the southern Italian island, in which more than 300 people are believed to have died. "Today is a day for crying," Francis said of the tragedy.

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