

## **Bike owned by Pope Francis sells for 25 times its value**

Eric J. Lyman Religion News Service | Feb. 6, 2014 The Francis Chronicles  
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As investments go, this was a good one.

A Harley-Davidson motorcycle briefly owned by Pope Francis sold Thursday for \$325,000, more than 25 times the Kelley Blue Book resale value for a similar bike.

Chalk it up to the so-called "Francis effect" -- credited for everything from increased church attendance in Italy to a surge of tourists arriving in Rome from the pope's native Argentina. Now, evidently, it dramatically changes the value of objects the pope once owned.

"It's a record for a post-vintage 21st century motorbike," said a spokesman for Bonhams-France, the Paris-based auction house that sold the 2013 1585cc Dyna Super Glide bike as part of a wider auction that includes classic sports cars and stately Rolls-Royces.

Francis never rode the bike, which was a gift from Harley-Davidson last summer to mark the company's 110-year anniversary. But he did sign it before donating it to the Rome-based chapter of the Catholic charity Caritas, which will use the money to refurbish the group's charity hostel as well as a soup kitchen the group runs from Rome's main train station.

The pope's golden touch is not limited to vehicles: Bonhams-France said a Harley-Davidson leather jacket, given to the pope along with the motorbike, sold for more than \$75,000. The buyers for the motorbike and the jacket were not identified.

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