# Pope Francis apologises for using offensive slur towards gay men in closed-door meeting



Pope Francis has apologized for using an offensive slur toward gay men during a closed-door meeting with Italian bishops on May 20, 2024. Reports first surfaced on the Italian tabloid website Dagospia, followed by mainstream outlets like Corriere della Sera and La Repubblica, indicating that the Pope used the term "frociaggine," a highly derogatory word, while discussing the admission of gay men into seminaries.

The Vatican's press office, through director Matteo Bruni, issued a statement acknowledging the controversy. Bruni clarified that the Pope did not intend to offend or express himself in homophobic terms and extended apologies to those who felt hurt by his language. Bruni reiterated Francis's past statements of inclusiveness, stating, "In the Church, there is room for everyone, just as we are."

These comments have sparked significant backlash, especially as they seem to contradict Pope Francis's previous more inclusive tone towards the LGBTQ+ community. He has previously made headlines with statements like “Who am I to judge?” and has supported the idea of priests blessing same-sex couples under certain circumstances.

The Pope’s remarks were reportedly made in the context of proposals to change guidelines for admitting candidates to seminaries, with Francis reaffirming that openly gay men should not be admitted, citing concerns about leading a double life. This reaffirmation aligns with a long-standing Vatican stance against ordaining men with "deep-seated homosexual tendencies."

While Francis's native language is Spanish, some have suggested that his use of the Italian slang term might have been a linguistic error, despite his fluency in Italian from an early age. The Vatican has not confirmed the exact wording of his statements due to the private nature of the meeting.