# Rome's Pride Parade Embraces Pope Francis' Controversial Remark with Defiant Celebration



**Rome's Pride Responds to Pope Francis' Controversial Remark**

On June 16, 2024, during Rome's annual Pride parade, participants prominently displayed images of Pope Francis in response to a recent controversy involving the pontiff. The parade featured an array of vibrant displays including bare-chested men in pink angel wings, women draped in rainbow flags, and drag queens on parade floats.

The controversy began after Italian media reported that Pope Francis used an offensive slur against gay men at a meeting with priests, suggesting there was too much “gayness” in the church. The Vatican has since apologized for the incident.

In reaction, Pride attendees embraced the slur, using it as a slogan for this year's celebration. Cardboard cutouts of Pope Francis adorned with flower necklaces, glittery banners, and stickers featuring his image were prevalent throughout the event. Participants wore papal hats and T-shirts that read, “There is never too much frociaggine,” transforming the derogatory term into a mark of pride.

Martina Lorina, a 28-year-old actress, held a banner with the slur. Daniele Lacitignola, a 34-year-old Christian and gay man, carried a cardboard cutout of Francis, expressing that the Pope is always welcome at Pride. Others echoed this sentiment, using humor and creativity to neutralize the insult.

Despite the lighthearted approach, there were serious undertones. Some attendees voiced concerns about the potential negative impact of the Pope's words on Italy's L.G.B.T.Q. community, particularly in light of the country’s stance on same-sex marriage and recent governmental actions affecting the rights of same-sex couples.

The event also highlighted individuals like Dolly Deville, a 20-year-old artist, who dressed in a papal robe for Pride, expressing hurt over the Pope's language. His boyfriend, Edoardo Camillucci, emphasized the inappropriateness of the slur, especially coming from a figure of religious authority.

The Pride parade showcased a defiant yet celebratory spirit, turning a moment of controversy into an empowering display of identity and resilience.