

Pope quotes late cardinal to say church is '200 years out of date'

Vatican City (dpa) – Pope Francis on Saturday called on the Vatican hierarchy to embrace change as he quoted a late progressive cardinal who warned that the Catholic Church was seriously behind the times.

"Cardinal Martini, in his last interview a few days before his death, said words that should make us reflect: 'The church is 200 years out of date. Why don't we rouse ourselves? Are we afraid?'" Francis said.

Italian Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini was a former Archbishop of Milan and a leading liberal voice in the Catholic Church. Once seen as a possible pope, he died from Parkinson's in August 2012.

The pope quoted him in his traditional pre-Christmas address to the Roman Curia, the Vatican bureaucracy. He used such occasions in the past to berate cardinals and other Curia members over their failings.

In his speech, Francis said the church needs to adapt to epochal changes and accept a historic loss of influence in secularized Western societies.

"We are no longer under a Christian regime because faith – especially in Europe, but also in large parts of the West – is no longer an obvious prerequisite of common life, and on the contrary, often it is even rejected, mocked, marginalized and ridiculed," he said.

Secularization is a long-term trend in Western societies, but the Catholic Church has seen its standing further jeopardized by long-running clergy sex abuse and financial scandals.

Francis did not directly mention the scandals, but his drive to reform the Roman Curia aims to make church structures focus more on "evangelization" and less on "self-preservation."

Source:

<https://www.dpa-international.com/topic/pope-quotes-late-cardinal-say-church-200-years-date-urn%3Anewsml%3Adpa.com%3A20090101%3A191221-99-229769>

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