

# [***Pope Francis Said He s Not Well Amid Health Concerns***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69S1-68S1-DXVP-5014-00000-00&context=1516831)

Forbes.com

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**Length:** 632 words

**Byline:** William Skipworth, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** The 86-year-old pope has suffered a number of health issues in recent years.

**Body**

**Topline**

Pope Francistolda crowd Wednesday he is not well, with the Vatican saying he has a "flu-like condition and inflammation of the respiratory tract the latest health struggles for the leader of the largest church in the world.

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Pope Francis attending the weekly general audience at the Vatican where he told the crowd he was "unwell," Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2023. (AP Photo/Gregorio Borgia)

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**Key Facts**

Francis told an audience during a weekly address that an aide would read his prepared speech because he was still not well with this flu and his voice is not good in Italian.

This comes after hecanceleda trip to Dubai for the United Nations climate change conference Tuesday on doctor s orders.

The pope was scheduled to leave for Dubai Friday.

After his prepared address read by an aide, Pope Francis made some limited remarks where he applauded the cease-fire between Israel and Hamas and thanked a circus group that had come to perform.

The pope has shortened his agenda, but is still presiding over meetings daily, according toRome Reports.

Forbes has reached out to the Vatican for further comment.

**News Peg**

Weeks away from his 87th birthday, Pope Francis has suffered a number of health issues throughout his life, particularly over the past few years. In June, he spent nine days in a Rome hospital after receiving abdominal surgery to repair a hernia and remove scarring, and in March, he was hospitalized for three days to receive treatment for bronchitis and difficulty breathing, according to theAssociated Press. Additionally, he had colon surgery performed in 2019 and ocular surgery in 2021. The pope also suffers from sciatica on occasion, causing him difficulty walking or standing, and he often uses a wheelchair or cane. Even when he was a young man in his 20s, Pope Francis suffered from a severe respiratory infection in 1957 and doctors had to remove part of one of his lungs.

**Tangent**

Francis s health struggles come amid a row the pope is having with a conservative flank of the Catholic church in America. On Tuesday, he reportedlyevicted Cardinal Raymond Burkefrom his Vatican apartment and revoked his salary. This punishment was handed down after a number of highly critical statement and actions the American prelate had made towards the pope, particularly his efforts to make the church more welcoming to the LGBTQ community and to give more responsibility to women and lay-people (non-priests). Similarly, earlier this month, hedismissed Bishop Joseph Stricklandfrom his post in east Texas after he had been vocally critical of the pope. Strickland had called a recent synod (a meeting of church leaders called by the pope) garbage and shareda videoon social media that called Pope Francis a diabolically disoriented clown. Additionally, the Texas bishop had waded into ***politics***, including once in December 2020 when he spoke at a Washington, D.C. rally organized by former President Donald Trump s supporters seeking to overturn the results of the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

**Key Background**

Pope Francis was named pontiff of the Catholic Church in 2013 when Pope Benedict XVI stepped down. Pope Benedict XVI was the first pope since 1415 nearly six centuries to resign from the position before his death. At the time, many said this could set a newmodern precedentfor papal succession where the papacy typically isn t served until death.

**Further Reading**

Pope Francis Reportedly Punishes Cardinal Burke A Frequent Critic And The Second American Conservative Church Leader He s Rebuked(Forbes)

Pope Francis Ousts Conservative Texas Bishop After Frequent Attacks(Forbes)

Pope Francis Said Homosexuality Isn t A Crime Here s What Else He s Said About LGBTQ Issues(Forbes)

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