

Electing the new Pope

Pope Benedict's unexpected resignation has set in motion the centuries-old process of electing a new pope. All cardinals are summoned to Rome for a meeting at the Vatican which is followed by the Papal election, or Conclave

Conclave All cardinals under age of 80 – currently 117 – are eligible to vote

Origin

Europe 61 (Italy 28)
Latin America 19
North America 14
Asia/Oceania 12
Africa 11

Tarcisio Bertone: Cardinal Camerlengo, or Chamberlain, will supervise whole election process

Domus Sanctae Marthae: Lodgings for cardinals taking part in conclave

During conclave, cardinals reside within Vatican and are not permitted any contact with outside world

Saint Peter's Basilica

Cardinals take short bus ride to Sistine Chapel to vote

Great Bell

Balcony

St. Peter's Square

Sistine Chapel

1492 Conclave first to be held here.
Site of all conclaves since 1878

Room of Tears

Voting proceedings

- Day One:** Cardinals celebrate Mass before walking in procession to Sistine Chapel
- After entering chapel, Cardinals place hand on Gospel and swear oath of secrecy under penalty of excommunication
- Latin command **"Extra Omnes"** instructs everyone not taking part in election to leave – Sistine Chapel sealed by Camerlengo and first ballot begins
- Under inscription **"I elect as Supreme Pontiff"** each cardinal-elect writes name of his preferred papal candidate on ballot

Eligo in Summum Pontificem

- Each elector approaches altar with folded ballot held up in clear view. After kneeling in prayer, ballot is placed in bronze urn

Count

- Ballots tallied by three Scrutineers, and names read aloud. Ballots then bound together by needle and thread, each pierced through word "Eligo"

Acceptance

Having given his consent, **New pope** goes to adjacent **Room of Tears**, where he changes into papal vestments before receiving pledges of obedience from fellow cardinals

Habemus Papam!

Announcement made in Latin: "We have a Pope". Newly-elected pontiff delivers blessing from balcony of St Peter's Basilica

Day Two onwards:

Two votes held each morning and two each afternoon

If no decision is reached after 34 ballots, field of competitors is restricted to two candidates who won most preferences in final vote. **New Pope is then chosen by simple majority**

Reaching a decision

Pope is elected by two-thirds majority plus one. If no cardinal wins vote, ballots are burned to produce black smoke. White smoke and ringing of bell indicate Pope has been chosen

Electric air pump: Ensures smoke exits through chimney

Stove: Chemicals used to produce black or white smoke

False floor: Jamming devices hidden under floor prevent cell phones from working

Screen, or transenna

