Pope Francis before His Election

Catholic World News coverage 1997 - 2013

by Philip F. Lawler, ed.

Catholic World News has covered Jorge Mario Bergoglio since 1997, when Pope Francis was still a bishop. These stories offer background on the man who became Pope on March 13, 2013.

Cover illustration and design by Chris Pelicano.

Trinity Communications
CatholicCulture.org
P. O. Box 582
Manassas, VA 20108
The chapters of this book appeared first on the Trinity Communications website, CatholicCulture.org.

Our website includes many more Catholic materials, including daily news, commentary, liturgical year resources, Church documents, reviews, and collections of historic Catholic writings and references. You can also sign up for daily and weekly email newsletters.

Trinity Communications is a non-profit corporation. If you would like to support our work, please register and contribute on the website; or mail a check or money order along with your email address to Trinity Communications, P.O. Box 582, Manassas, VA 20108, USA.

We look forward to seeing you at www.catholicculture.org.
# Table of Contents

Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 5
Auxiliary To Become First Jesuit Archbishop Of Buenos Aires ........................................... 6
Catholics, Jews Both Victims Of Nazis Says Jewish Leader .................................................. 7
Buenos Aires Archbishop Sues Argentina Central Bank ......................................................... 8
Argentine Archbishop Encourages Ministry For Divorced ................................................... 9
Argentine Archbishop Asks Candidates To Support Life ..................................................... 10
Mass For Victims Of Argentina Plane Crash ........................................................................ 11
Argentina Regions Recognize Homosexual Unions ............................................................... 12
Argentine Prelate Opposes Easing Abortion Law ................................................................. 13
Christians should respond to crises, poverty with hope ....................................................... 15
Cardinal responds to blasphemous art exhibit .................................................................... 16
Toward the conclave #10: rating the papabile .................................................................... 17
Life sentence for Argentine priest found a “dirty war” accomplice ...................................... 23
Unknown cardinal breaks secrecy, describes conclave ......................................................... 24
New themes in Synod discussions (updated Wednesday) ..................................................... 26
Argentine cardinal refuses to discuss conclave support ....................................................... 28
Post-synod committee named .............................................................................................. 29
Beatification inquiry opens for Argentine “dirty war” victims .............................................. 30
Argentine reporter explains Vatican rejection of ambassador ............................................ 31
non-prophet .......................................................................................................................... 33
Vatican talks on Argentine Church-state showdown ........................................................... 34
Argentine president, Cardinal Bertone air differences ........................................................ 35
Don’t become a ‘cleric of the state,’ Argentinean cardinal warns priests ............................... 36
Pope, bishops denounce ‘scandalous’ rate of poverty in Argentina .................................... 37
Argentine cardinal: baptize children even if parents are lapsed Catholics .......................... 38
Argentine bishops speak out against same-sex marriage, urge faithful to demonstrate ....... 39
Argentina legalizes homosexual marriage .......................................................................... 40
Italian magazine publishes insider’s account of 2005 papal conclave ................................ 41
New Evangelization counters ecclesiastical careerism, says Argentine cardinal .............. 42
New curial posts give extra Vatican clout to several cardinals .......................................... 43
Argentine cardinal decries priests’ refusal to baptize out-of-wedlock children ................... 45
Argentine Cardinal Bergoglio elected Pope Francis ............................................................ 46
Introduction

by Phil Lawler

March 14, 2013

Who is Pope Francis? Since the surprise announcement that Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio had been elected Supreme Pontiff, millions of curious Catholics have sought more information about the new Pope.

The Catholic World News (CWN) service first took note of then-Bishop Bergoglio in 1997, when he was named an auxiliary in the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires. By 2005 he had gained enough prominence so that CWN listed him as one of the leading *papabili* in the days leading up to the conclave that would ultimately elect Pope Benedict XVI. Over the years the future Pontiff has appeared in a few dozen CWN stories, covering a variety of different topics.

In the collection that follows we have arranged all of the CWN news stories that mentioned the future Pope Francis, excluding only those reports in which his name merely appeared on a list of prelates, with no particular news value in itself. We also include one comment by our pseudonymous pundit, Diogenes.

These reports are arranged here in chronological order, beginning with our earliest reports. We have made no attempt to add context or commentary; these news stories are presented in this collection just as they originally appeared on the CWN site. The result is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis, but a series of vignettes that might, taken all together, help readers gain a better understanding of the new Pope.
Auxiliary To Become First Jesuit Archbishop Of Buenos Aires

June 06, 1997

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (CWN) - Auxiliary Bishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires will become the first Jesuit to head the archdiocese of the capital city of Argentina, after Cardinal Antonio Quarracino announced his appointment as the new coadjutor archbishop.

Major local newspapers reacted by calling the appointment of Bishop Bergoglio as coadjutor a surprise, since the Jesuit bishop has always kept a low profile. Cardinal Quarracino will turn 75 in August 1998 and it is likely that his canon law-mandated resignation will be accepted immediately, since he is at present in a wheel chair because of several health problems.

Referring to his eventual successor, Cardinal Quarracino said, “Bergoglio is a silent and extremely effective man, fully loyal to the Church and very close to the priests and the Catholic in the pew. He is good news for this archdiocese.” Bishop Bergoglio, who holds a degree in chemistry, joined the Jesuits after studying at the Buenos Aires Seminary and was ordained a priest in 1969. After some time in Germany, he came back to Argentina and was elected Provincial of the Jesuits in 1975. During that time, he became well known in the Church for his governing skills shown in the way he handled the crisis of authority and the lack of vocations that at that time was affecting the congregation.

By 1980, the Jesuits in Argentina were back in their commitment to fidelity to the Holy Father and recovering from the vocation crisis. In 1990, Bishop Bergoglio was appointed auxiliary of Buenos Aires. The new coadjutor did not make any statement during the press conference, but the influential local newspaper La Nacion, described him as “a man of solid and sound theological formation who is at the same time very pastoral.”
Catholics, Jews Both Victims Of Nazis Says Jewish Leader

May 29, 1998

BUENOS AIRES (CWNews.com) - Jack Fuchs, an Argentine Jewish leader and survivor of the Auschwitz Nazi concentration camp, said on Thursday: “In Poland, Catholics were also the object of hate and persecution from the Nazis.”

Fuchs was invited to speak at the Buenos Aires Catholic Cathedral in an interfaith service presided over by Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio and attended by US rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz. “At least 25% of Polish Catholics were tortured or murdered by the Nazis during the occupation of Poland,” said Fuchs. “Another memorial to remember so many Catholics murdered for opposing the barbaric Nazi regime should also be built,” he added, referring to the mural recently built in Buenos Aires to remember the Jews murdered during the Shoah.

“In Poland, Nazism not only targeted Judaism, but also Russians and, of course, militant Catholics,” said Fuchs, who lived in the Jewish ghetto of Lodz until his family was jailed in Auschwitz. His two parents and two sisters died at the concentration camp. Fuchs, who at 74 has been honored by the Catholic Church in Argentina, said in a conversation with the Argentine Catholic News Agency: “My life is a paradox. I did not deserve that much rejection as a youngster, and I don’t think I deserve this much honor as an elder.”
Buenos Aires Archbishop Sues Argentina Central Bank

March 01, 1999

BUENOS AIRES (CWNews.com) - Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires announced on Friday that he had filed a lawsuit against Argentina’s Central Bank for failing to prevent bank fraud that had falsely implicated his predecessor.

A spokesman for the archbishop said the Central Bank was responsible for fraud related to the collapse of Banco de Credito Provincial (BCP) in August 1997. In October of that year a judge called the now-deceased Archbishop Antonio Quarracino to explain why he had received a $10 million loan from BCP but never paid it back. It was learned that Archbishop Quarracino’s signature had been forged, but in December 1998, seven months after he had died, the Central Bank still raided the archbishop’s office for financial records.

“The archbishop wants to clear the name of his office. If (the Central Bank) has the right to investigate the archbishop, the archbishop has the right to ask whose responsibility it is,” said the spokesman. “The current archbishop, Jorge Bergoglio, called an international consulting firm, Andersen Consulting, as soon as he took over to audit the office to see if that money had really come in or not,” he said. “That money never came in here. He never saw it.”

He added, “The issue here is a chain of responsibility. If the credit existed, if letters and documents were signed illegally, who controls that? Whose responsibility is that? The regulating institution. The good name of the archbishop is at stake here.”
BUENOS AIRES (CWNNews.com) - The archbishop of Buenos Aires this week welcomed to the archdiocese a group of Catholic couples devoted to ministry to divorced couples by saying that “this is a critical pastoral field that requires especial attention.”

“I invite you to work here and to show those couples the merciful face of God the Father,” said Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio in his letter addressed to Jorge and Silvia Castello, founders and directors of Road to Nazareth. “Couples in that situation have to be encouraged in their path to sanctity and have to be welcomed by all Catholics in order to make them clear that they belong to the Church,” the archbishop added.

Road to Nazareth was founded in 1992 in the nearby diocese of Lomas de Zamora, a suburb of Buenos Aires. Although the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires has launched ministries for divorced Catholics in several parishes, Archbishop Bergoglio recognized that the success of Road to Nazareth is due to the fact that married couples are the primary ministers.

The group, in fact, starts by bringing divorced couples back to the Christian life proportional to their canonical status, helps them improve their family life, and then involves them in the ministry with other divorced couples. Road to Nazareth counts on the permanent assistance of a Catholic priest to provide spiritual assistance and guidance and also has the advice of several experts in Canon Law, to help couples understand their canonical status and even explore if the conditions for an annulment exist.

Archbishop Bergoglio especially congratulated the movement for “its commitment in promoting the reading of the Bible, a intense spiritual life, as well as a warm spirit of friendship and sharing.” He also encouraged “your yearly pilgrimage to a Marian shrine, which is a great occasion for prayer and family renewal.”
Argentine Archbishop Asks Candidates To Support Life

August 04, 1999

BUENOS AIRES (CWNews.com) - Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires said on Tuesday, during the opening Mass of the Third Pan-American Encounter of Politicians and Legislators for Life, that presidential candidates should openly express their position on life issues.

The conference, organized by the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for the Family, was opened with a Mass led by Archbishop Bergoglio in the Cathedral of Buenos Aires and attended by more than 50 politicians and legislators from throughout the South America. The attendees at the Mass included Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem and the two leading presidential candidates, officialist Eduardo Duhalde and opposition leader Fernando De la Rua.

“Our society is menaced by the culture of death, which is a by-product of a social environment of self indulgence, vanity, and petulance,” Archbishop Bergoglio said during the homily.

“The silent scream of so many unborn children, that daily genocide ignored by most of the people and even legally protected in some countries is a consequence of the loss of the sense of the true value of life,” said the archbishop, who added that “the dying person longing for a small sign of affection and tenderness, and to whom is only offered a quick death; the multitude of families destroyed by selfishness and consumerism, are other symptoms of this culture that has to be changed radically.”

The archbishop also said that the option for a culture of life “must be expressed also at a political level in all environments of public life,” and that “also here in Argentina, we expect our candidates to express their views on life issues and to show their support for life.” While Duhalde has said that he will follow Menem’s strongly pro-life policy, De la Rua has avoided expressing his view on critical pro-life issues. Several congressmen of De la Rua’s party, the FREPASO, have supported the legalization of abortion.
Mass For Victims Of Argentina Plane Crash

September 02, 1999

BUENOS AIRES (CWNews.com) - The Archdiocese of Buenos Aires announced on Thursday that a Mass would be celebrated in the city’s cathedral for the victims of the plane crash that took place on August 31 at the Jorge Newberry National Airport.

Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires made the announcement after releasing the condolences sent by Pope John Paul II. In the message, signed by the Vatican’s Secretary of State, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Pope expressed his “deep sorrow for the sad news of the air accident in the capital, which has filled numerous families with grief.”

The Pope also offered prayers “for the eternal rest of the deceased and prays the Lord so he may offer consolation and spiritual serenity to those who cry at the loss of a beloved one.”

A similar letter was sent by the Pope to Archbishop Carlos Jose Nanez of the northern city of Cordoba since a large number of the more than 80 dead were Cordoba natives.
Argentina Regions Recognize Homosexual Unions

March 19, 2003

The Argentine capital region of Buenos Aires and Rio Negro province became the first jurisdictions in Latin America to recognize homosexual civil unions this week, after months of pressure from the Socialist Party and homosexual groups. Three other provinces are considering a similar step.

The new laws grant homosexual “civil unions” many of the rights previously reserved to husbands and wives, stopping short of same-sex marriage and adoption but scoring a clear blow against traditional marriage.

Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires said the change “goes against natural law,” noting that homosexual unions are “caricatures of families that have neither a future themselves nor the ability to create a future society.”
Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires has released a strong statement calling on legislators of the autonomous city government to reject a proposed law that would legalize abortion in cases where the baby suffered from a severe physical defect.

The legislature of Buenos Aires will vote on Thursday, June 12, on a bill regarding "pregnancies incompatible with life. The measure would legalize the "termination of pregnancies" of so-called "non-viable fetuses," affected by pathologies like anencephaly.

“Every baby is a human being, thus protected by the constitution,” said the cardinal. “By terminating his life three months or three days before he is delivered, we are taking away the precious time awarded to him to live in the joy of the womb.”

Cardinal Bergoglio argued:

An anencephalic baby is a sick human being. But being sick does not make him any less human, because he is the fruit of human procreation, with human form and a human destiny. There should be no doubt, therefore, that we are confronting someone with an individual existence, someone belonging to the human species, just like any other embryo.

In the case of an anencephaly or any other disease, the diseased baby is the medical patient, and therefore the first one who should be protected by medical care and by the law.

Both the mother and father of such an special baby must receive adequate care and attention to face the psychological and emotional difficulties involved in facing this reality, which is so different from the one they were dreaming of and hoping for when they brought this new life into existence.

The Civic Movement of Women, a local pro-life organization, backed the cardinal’s statement by saying that “the ‘interruption’ of such pregnancies can be compared to an aggravated euthanasia, because in this case the patient is not in pain and is not asking for
it. Such inhuman act of sheer violence should never become legal.”
Christians should respond to crises, poverty with hope

August 09, 2004

During the celebration of the feast of St. Cajetan, venerated in Argentina as the patron of food and work, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires called on Argentineans to not lose hope in the face of injustice and poverty.

Thousands of faithful stood in line on the eve of the feast of St. Cajetan to enter the shrine at midnight, to pray for work and to give thanks for bread on the table.

For the last 20 years, the first person to enter the temple has been Delia Noris Lencina who, draped in an Argentinean flag, crawls on her knees to the image of St. Cajetan.

“There is so much injustice, suffering, and violence. And yet the Lord puts bread on our table and he gives us renewed strength to carry on and he sends us out again to our jobs, our families and our country: we still have far to go. There is so much to be done!” exclaimed Cardinal Bergoglio during the Mass on Saturday.

The cardinal encouraged young people with a phrase taken from Pope John Paul II’s latest book: “Get up! Let’s go! Let us go confident in Christ.”

He also encouraged Argentineans to “partake of the Bread which gives us the strength to work for our families, which restores our dignity and our desire to continue struggling and to fulfill our mission.”

“Get up and eat of this Bread which we share as companions on the journey and which makes us feel as brothers and sisters, the people of our country, the people of God,” he concluded.
Cardinal responds to blasphemous art exhibit

December 02, 2004

Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, called on the faithful this week not to be afraid and to persevere in the faith in response to a blasphemous art exhibit taking place in the Argentinean capital.

“For some time public expressions of ridicule and insult of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Most Holy Virgin Mary, as well as numerous exhibits against the religious and moral values we profess, have been on display throughout the city,” the cardinal warned.

He lamented that the exhibiting of blasphemous art is taking place at a cultural center that is funded by taxpayer money.

“Jesus warned us that these things would take place, and with much tenderness he told us not to be afraid, that we are his small flock, that we should persevere in the struggle for the faith and in charity, placing our hope in him and praying with the true confidence of children of a Father who loves us,” he added.

He also announced an act of reparation and request for forgiveness will take place on December 7, the vigil of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. “I invite you to pray and fast on that day, as a day of penance during which we pray to the Lord, as a Christian community, for forgiveness of our sins and of those of our city. May our Lady of Lujan be with us in her affection,” he concluded.

The cardinal made his statement in response to an art exhibit by Leon Ferrari, a well-known militant atheist who has made hundreds of anti-Catholic works such as saints burning themselves in a toaster, the Blessed Mother in a frying pan, and a statue of the Last Supper in which Christ and the Apostles face a pack of rats.

In 1997, Ferrari founded the Club for the Impious, Heretics, Apostates, Blasphemers, Atheists, Agnostics, and Infidels.
Toward the conclave #10: rating the papabile

April 16, 2005

An attempt to predict the outcome of a papal election is, by its nature, a very risky business, and readers should be constantly reminded that a conclave will often produce unexpected results. With that caution emphasized clearly from the outset, CWR offers these thoughts on the leading candidates to succeed Pope John Paul II.

In the list that follows, we appraise the chances of the one clear favorite, a dozen possible contenders, and three “longshot” candidates for the pontificate.

Almost certainly, the next Pope will be one of the 115 cardinal-electors entering the conclave on April 18. Of these, 58 are from Europe, 20 from Latin America, 14 from North America, 11 from Africa, 10 from Asia, and 2 from Australia and the Pacific. The new Bishop of Rome is not likely to be a native of the Eternal City; none of the cardinal-electors was raised in Rome.

The Favorite

By virtually all accounts, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger will be the main focus of attention as the conclave begins. He is not only the dean of the College of Cardinals, but also without a doubt the dominant personality among the electors.

As the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith since 1981, Cardinal Ratzinger was one of the closest allies of Pope John Paul II—a colleague so highly valued that the late Pope re-appointed the German cardinal several times, overriding Ratzinger’s desire to return to his native Bavaria. Yet although he was clearly the right-hand man of the late Pontiff, Cardinal Ratzinger has his own clear vision for the future of the Church, which he has expressed clearly in speeches and published works like the best-selling book-length interview known as The Ratzinger Report. He stands for a bold proclamation of Catholic doctrine and an energetic defense of Christian culture—even, if necessary, as a minority in a secularized European society.

A theologian who participated in Vatican II (where he was associated with the liberal faction), Cardinal Ratzinger’s intellectual prowess is unquestioned. After more than 2 decades in the Roman Curia, he knows the ways of the Vatican well, yet he also has

www.catholicculture.org
pastoral experience as the former Archbishop of Munich.

Disadvantages: At 78 (today is his birthday), Cardinal Ratzinger may be perceived as too old for the rigors of the papacy. He has a history of heart problems which, while mild in themselves, are enough to heighten that concern.

More important, Cardinal Ratzinger has been a lightning-rod for controversy both within the Church (because of his disciplinary action against wayward theologians) and outside (because of his insistence that Christ is the sole means to salvation). His public image as the authoritarian Panzerkardinal, although it is completely at odds with his mild personality, would make him the target of vitriolic attacks by secular liberals.

Until recent weeks, those obvious drawbacks seemed to be enough to eliminate Cardinal Ratzinger from serious consideration as a candidate for the papacy. Yet as the cardinals gathered in Rome, their thoughts turned toward him. As they begin their deliberations, the cardinals will all face the same initial question: whether to vote for, or against, Cardinal Ratzinger. No other prelate commands nearly the same consideration. Even if he is not the 265th Pontiff, his support could be crucial to the conclave’s eventual choice.

A Dozen Possibilities

1. Cardinal Francis Arinze has spent the past 20 years in the Roman Curia—first as president of the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue, then (since 2002) as prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship. Consecrated a bishop at the remarkably young age of 33, he was Archbishop of Onitsha, Nigeria, for 17 years before his summons to the Vatican. He is widely traveled, articulate, and staunchly orthodox. His age, 72, might be seen as ideal. His background in a country where Christians must confront the challenge of militant Islam is an asset. He is certainly the leading African candidate, and perhaps the foremost of all the papabile from Third World nations. Disadvantages: Cardinal Arinze’s penchant for plain speech can ruffle feathers, and some electors view him as unpredictable.

2. Cardinal Angelo Scola is the Patriarch of Venice, the archdiocese that produced 3 Popes (Pius X, John XXIII, and John Paul I) in the 20th century. A polyglot, a reliably orthodox theologian, and former rector of the Lateran University, he is associated with the Communion and Liberation movement. He has taken a particular interest in promoting the Gospel in Arabic countries—an interest that

www.catholicculture.org
could be useful as Christianity confronts the challenge of rising Islam. Attractive and energetic, he has moved to the fore quickly among the Italian cardinals since receiving his red hat in 2003. 

Disadvantages: A comparatively young man at 63, Cardinal Scola comes from a family with a history of longevity that might give pause to electors with concerns about the prospect of another long pontificate.

3. Cardinal Dionigi Tettamanzi of Milan is the candidate most highly touted by the Italian media. He has headed three large Italian sees: Ancona, Genoa, and now Milan, the largest archdiocese in Europe. He is regarded as a “moderate” candidate—striking a balance between his predecessor in Milan, Carlo Maria Martini, a leader of “progressive” forces within the Church, and Cardinal Ratzinger. An expert in bioethics and sexual morality, he was heavily involved in the drafting of the papal encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. He has also been outspoken in questioning the globalization of the world’s economic system. Cardinal Tettamanzi draws support from across the spectrum of political and theological opinions. 

Disadvantages: Although he enjoys working with the media, Cardinal Tettamanzi is far from telegenic, and his lack of facility with languages—he does not speak English—would contrast sharply with the communications skills of Pope John Paul II.

4. Cardinal Camillo Ruini, the vicar of the Rome diocese, and president of the Italian bishops’ conference, is yet another Italian prelate who will receive serious consideration, particularly in light of his friendship with Cardinal Ratzinger. He has emerged in the past few years as a major factor in Italian political debates, particularly on the country’s involvement in Iraq and the campaign for a new law on assisted reproduction. 

Disadvantages: His quadruple-bypass heart surgery in 2000 raised questions about his health. There are also concerns about his lack of personal charm and international experience.

5. Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires could be the foremost among the Latin American papabile, and is widely regarded as the one most likely to earn Cardinal Ratzinger’s support. A Jesuit, he is respected as a philosopher and theologian, but especially as a pastor who has emphasized spiritual principles to his Argentine flock in the midst of their economic crises. 

Disadvantages: No Jesuit has ever become Roman Pontiff, and it seems unlikely that record would be broken at a time when the Society of Jesus is noted for dissent and declining vocations.
6. Cardinal Claudio Hummes of Sao Paulo is another leading Latin American contender. The Franciscan head of the largest diocese in the world’s most populous Catholic nation, he has a reputation for concern about poverty and Church social doctrine, and close ties with the charismatic renewal. **Disadvantages:** Some electors question the cardinal’s friendly ties with Brazil’s mercurial leftists President “Lula” da Silva. Chosen by Pope John Paul II to preach the Lenten Retreat at the Vatican in 2002, he failed to impress many observers.

7. Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Vienna is a brilliant young Dominican prelate from an illustrious noble family with ties to the Hapsburg empire. Once a student of Cardinal Ratzinger, he was the principal editor of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; in Austria he is one of the more innovative promoters of the “new evangelization” of Europe. **Disadvantages:** The Church in Austria has been wracked by controversy and scandal. And a young (60) theologian from central Europe might be seen as too similar to Pope John Paul II.

8. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, a member of the Salesian order and Archbishop of Genoa, served as Cardinal Ratzinger’s right-hand man for 7 years at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Respected and affable, he could emerge as a compromise candidate among the Italian prelates. **Disadvantages:** Cardinal Bertone’s gregarious nature can detract from the gravitas expected in a Roman Pontiff; other prelates looked askance when he served as color-commentator for television broadcasts of soccer games, and shook hands with mourners outside the Vatican basilica during the obsequies for Pope John Paul II.

9. Cardinal Godfried Danneels of Brussels may be the leading candidate for the “progressive” wing of the College of Cardinals, now that Cardinal Martini (mentioned above) has retired. The successor to another noted liberal voice, Cardinal Leo Suenens, he has staked out his position as a proponent of democracy within the Church, and distanced himself from Vatican statements on controversial issues such as the use of condoms and the role of women. **Disadvantages**

10. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re is the ultimate Vatican “insider.” He was the powerful sostituto who handled the day-to-day flow of Vatican paperwork from
1989 until 2001, when he became prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, supervising the appointments of bishops all around the world. No one questions his administrative abilities; indeed he is widely perceived as the natural choice to become Secretary of State in the next pontificate. Disadvantages: Cardinal Re has spent his priestly ministry almost exclusively in administrative roles; he has never been a diocesan bishop or even a pastor.

11. Cardinal Marc Ouellet of Quebec is another trained theologian, a Sulpician who studied with the late, renowned, Hans Urs von Balthasar. A specialist in ecumenical affairs—he was secretary of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity—he also taught at the pontifical institute for study of marriage and the family before taking his present post in Canada, where he has been heavily involved in debates on same-sex marriage. Disadvantages: Another 60-year-old theology specialist, he has not had time—since his appointment in 2002—to reform a chaotic Canadian archdiocese.

12. Cardinal Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa is the first Honduran ever elevated to the College of Cardinals. A Salesian cleric with a distinct gift for working with the media, he is at ease with several languages, having taught in Rome, Austria, and the US as well as Central America. A former head of the Latin American bishops’ conference CELAM, he is regarded as moderately liberal on both political and theological issues. Disadvantages: Perhaps a bit too young (62), he may have undermined his liberal standing with a highly publicized outburst in October 2002, in which he said that the sex-abuse scandal in the US was a case of media “persecution” of the Catholic Church.

Three Longshots

While unlikely to win the conclave’s support, these three prelates pose intriguing possibilities for consideration:

- Cardinal Audrys Backis of Vilnius, Lithuania is approximately the right age, at 68; he has the right experience in both the Vatican diplomatic corps (with postings in the Philippines, Costa Rica, Turkey, and Nigeria) and the Roman Curia (the powerful Secretariat of State). Disadvantages: The conclave probably will not choose another prelate from the former Soviet empire.

- Cardinal Ivan Dias of Bombay is one of the few prelates who can rival Pope John
Paul’s linguistic ability; he is fluent in at least 17 languages. Another veteran of the Vatican diplomatic corps and the Secretariat of State, he now heads a huge diocese in an often hostile environment. A friend and ally of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, he has protested the anti-Christian attacks by Hindu zealots, yet observes that for the Church, “persecution is something natural,” often presaging a great growth in the faith. Disadvantages: When speculation turns toward a Pontiff from the Third World, most prelates speak about Africa or Latin America, where Catholicism is growing—not Asia, where the faith remains largely unknown.

- Cardinal Lubomyr Husar is the Major Archbishop of Kiev, the spiritual leader of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, which is the largest Eastern Church in full communion with the Holy See. The selection of a Byzantine prelate would be a sensational move, sure to cause turmoil in Vatican relations with the Orthodox churches, with results that are difficult to predict. Trivia note: Cardinal Husar is the only US citizen on this list.
Life sentence for Argentine priest found a “dirty war” accomplice

October 10, 2007

An Argentine Catholic priest has been sentenced to life imprisonment for his role in human-rights violations under the country’s military government of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Father Christian Von Wernich was convicted after a 3-month trial on charges of involvement in the killing or torture of more than 50 political activists. The priest, who was serving at the time as chaplain to the police force in the nation’s capital city of Buenos Aires, reportedly informed police about what he had learned from suspects’ confessions. The police then used that information as the basis for obtaining further confessions, often under torture, occasionally leading to the suspects’ deaths.

During his trial Father Von Wernich insisted that he was innocent of the charges, and said that the accusations against him were part of a campaign to destroy the Church.

Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires responded quite differently to the court’s verdict, with a public statement indicating that any Catholic who participated in the “dirty war” against the leftists in Argentina “did so on his own responsibility, erring and sinning gravely against God, against mankind, and against his own conscience.”
Unknown cardinal breaks secrecy, describes conclave

September 23, 2005

Breaking his oath of secrecy, a member of the College of Cardinals has given a detailed description of the conclave that elected Pope Benedict XVI, an Italian television network has reported.

In an evening news program that aired on September 22, TG2 television reported that a cardinal, speaking on condition of anonymity, had given a full account of the papal election to the Italian journal Limes.

The unknown cardinal supposedly confirmed what Vatican-watchers had already concluded: that Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected on the fourth ballot of the conclave. He also provided the results of that ballot, saying that Cardinal Ratzinger won 84 votes, with 26 for the Argentine Jesuit, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio.

At the start of a papal conclave, all of the cardinal-electors swear a solemn oath to preserve the absolute secrecy of the proceedings. But journalists had previously persuaded some prelates to offer a few clues about the proceedings.

In an article entitled “How we elected Pope Ratzinger,” journalist Lucio Brunelli presents what he claims is an eyewitness account, furnished by an anonymous cardinal, of the 2-day conclave that took place April 18 and 19.

It is impossible to determine the accuracy of the account presented by Limes. Since the magazine does not identify the prelate who provided the report, there is no guarantee that the story is not a hoax. If it is indeed the account of a cardinal who participated in the conclave, the credibility of this eyewitness is severely undermined by his willingness to violate his oath. Still, sources at the Vatican note that the details of the story seem to match all of the available evidence about the conclave.

The cardinal recalls that when the 115 cardinal-electors entered the Sistine Chapel to begin their deliberations, they first swore the oath of secrecy, using a formula prescribed by Pope John Paul II in the apostolic constitution Universi Dominici, which sets the procedures for a papal election. After taking the solemn vow collectively, the cardinals then each swore the same oath individually, before the doors of the Sistine Chapel were closed.
Nonetheless, in spite of those vows, the *Limes* story says that the anonymous cardinal has supplied an exact count for each ballot of the election.

On the first ballot, taken in the evening of April 18, the story says that Cardinal Ratzinger won 47 votes. The other cardinals receiving ballots were Cardinal Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, with 10; Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, the retired Archbishop of Milan, with 9; Cardinal Camillo Ruini, the vicar for Rome, with 6; Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Secretary of State, with 4, Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa, with 3; and Cardinal Dionigi Tettamanzi of Milan, with 2.

The second ballot, conducted in the morning of April 19, found Cardinal Ratzinger with 65 votes, and Cardinal Bergoglio with 39. Cardinal Sodano held 4 votes, and 11 other votes were dispersed among various other prelates. The total of 65 for Cardinal Ratzinger gave him a majority, but remained short of the two-thirds necessary for election.

On the third ballot, the same morning, Cardinal Ratzinger’s total rose to 72, according to the report of the anonymous cardinal. Cardinal Bergoglio had 40 votes, and the other 3 votes were scattered. On the fourth ballot, taken in the afternoon, Cardinal Ratzinger reached 84 votes—well above the 77 needed for election.

The appearance of white smoke from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel in the afternoon of April 19 told observers that a new Pope had been elected. And the timing of the announcement led most Vatican-watchers to conclude that the new Pontiff had been chosen on the fourth ballot. The Vatican had disclosed in advance the schedule for voting during the conclave, with two votes scheduled every morning and two more in the afternoon. The afternoon session of the conclave had allowed time for only one ballot before the white smoke appeared.

The *Limes* account contradicts previous stories—based on less detailed leaks from conclave participants—suggesting that Cardinal Martini was the main rival to Cardinal Ratzinger during the conclave. According to the anonymous cardinal cited by *Limes*, the former Archbishop of Milan never won more than 9 votes.
New themes in Synod discussions
(updated Wednesday)

October 05, 2005

During sessions of the Synod of Bishops on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 4 and 5, participants continued to raise a broad variety of issues regarding the main theme of discussion: the Eucharist in the life of the Church.

On Wednesday morning, the Synod held the first small-group discussions, in which participants are divided into working groups arranged by language. These small-group discussions took place while Pope Benedict XVI—who has attended most of the general sessions—was holding his regular weekly public audience.

On Wednesday afternoon, the full membership of the Synod met once again in the Synod Hall, to hear prepared 6-minute addresses from a number of bishops. And in the evenings of both Tuesday and Wednesday, the bishops participated in a lively hour of free debate—a new feature of this year’s Synod schedule.

What follows is a sampling of the points raised by Synod participants during the discussions of October 4 and 5:

- Archbishop Janis Pujats of Riga, Latvia, made the observation that the liturgical reforms of Vatican II do not require the priest to face the people during the Mass, and although most churches today have altars built to accommodate that orientation, it is not obligatory.

- Archbishop Jan Pawel Lenga of Karaganda, Kazakhstan, said that the practice of receiving Communion in the hand makes it possible for consecrated Hosts to be stolen for use in Satanic rituals. At least in some countries, he added, receiving Communion in the hand implies a lack of reverence. The Melkite Patriarch Gregory III Laham—who has emerged as an active contributor to the Synod debates—replied that he favored the distribution of Communion in the hand.

- Cardinal George Cottier, the theologian of the pontifical household, remarked that the venerable pious practice of “spiritual communion” could be at least part of the solution to the problem facing Catholics who are divorced and remarried,
and thus ineligible to receive the Eucharist.

- Bishop Rimantas Norvila of Vilkaviskis, Lithuania, said that the decline in the practice of sacramental Confession has opened the door to occultism, breaking the ties that bind people to their parishes. He added that regular spiritual direction is the best means of forming a sensitive conscience and maintaining proper reverence for the Eucharist.

- Archbishop John Atcherley Dew of Wellington, New Zealand, returned to the question of divorced and remarried Catholics, encouraging discussion of a “pastoral approach” that would end what he called “the scandal of hunger for Eucharistic food.”

- Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, SJ, of Buenos Aires, Argentina, reported that the people of his flock are “Eucharistic Marian people; they unite affection for the Eucharist and affection for the Virgin, our Mother.”

- Bishop Lorenzo Voltolini Esti of Portoviejo, Ecuador, suggested that priests could refrain from celebrating Mass on Friday, in order to make themselves available to hear Confessions. He explained: “This should not be experienced as a day of Eucharistic absence but as a period of preparation for and expectation of the Eucharist.”
Argentine cardinal refuses to discuss conclave support

October 13, 2005

The Argentine cardinal who was reportedly the main challenger to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in the April papal election does not want to comment on leaked reports from the conclave.

“I am still confused and a bit hurt” by the published reports about the papal election, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio told the Italian daily L’Indipendente. “I don’t want to talk about these indiscretions.”

Noting that cardinals take an oath of secrecy about the proceedings of the conclave, he declined to speak about the report, published in the Italian journal Limes, in which an anonymous prelate broke that oath. The Limes report indicated that Cardinal Bergoglio had won 40 votes in the conclave, with Cardinal Ratzinger capturing a winning total of 84.

Cardinal Bergoglio, who is in Rome for the Synod of Bishops, added that public speculation about the cardinals’ voting pattern creates a misleading impression. “It is not we, the cardinals, but divine providence that guides the choice of the successor to Peter,” he said.

“Recounting anecdotes or facts about the conclave leads to the belief that it is the men who are deciding. But that is not the case,” the Argentine cardinal said. “I can only say that I recall a climate of intense recollection—almost mystical—that was present at those sessions. We were all conscious of being nothing but instruments, to serve divine providence in electing a proper successor for John Paul II. That is what happened.”

Cardinal Bergoglio expressed his confidence that the conclave had made the right selection. “Benedict XVI shows every day that he has exceptional qualities,” he said.

Questioned about reports that he might receive a post in the Roman Curia, the Jesuit cardinal said that he would be extremely reluctant to leave his current assignment as Archbishop of Buenos Aires. “In the Curia, I would die,” he said. “My life is in Buenos Aires. Without the people of my diocese, without their problems, I feeling something lacking every day.”
Post-synod committee named

October 24, 2005

Archbishop Nikola Eterovic, the general secretary of the Synod of Bishops, has released the names of the prelates selected for the post-synodal council. Some of the members were elected by the full Synod membership; others were appointed by Pope Benedict XVI.

The members are:

- Cardinal Francis Arinze, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship;
- Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio SJ of Buenos Aires, Argentina;
- Cardinal Juan Luis Cipriani Thorne of Lima, Peru;
- Bishop Djura Dzudzar, apostolic exarch of Serbia and Montenegro for Catholics of Byzantine Rite
- Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
- Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya of Kisangani, Democratic Republic of the Congo;
- Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor of Westminster, England;
- Archbishop John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan of Abuja, Niger and president of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar;
- Cardinal Marc Ouellet of Quebec, Canada
- Cardinal George Pell of Sydney, Australia;
- Cardinal Angelo Scola, patriarch of Venice, Italy
- Bishop Luis Antonio G. Tagle of Imus, Philippines
- Cardinal Telesphore Placidus Toppo of Ranchi, India;
- Bishop Donald William Wuerl of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and
- Bishop Joseph Zen Ze-kiun of Hong Kong

www.catholicculture.org
Beatification inquiry opens for Argentine “dirty war” victims

August 05, 2005

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, Argentina, has opened an inquiry into the violent death of five members of the Pallotine order in 1976.

The inquiry could be the first step toward beatification for three priests and two seminarians who were gunned down inside a parish church in Buenos Aires. Although their murderers were never identified, the killings are connected with the “dirty war” in which the government of Argentina reportedly killed thousands of political opponents during the 1970s and 1980s.

The opening of a cause for beatification of the Pallotine victims could have important political implications in Argentina, where questions still remain about the death or disappearance of tens of thousands of people. Catholic bishops in the country have faced questioning about their failure to speak out against the military junta and its brutal tactics.
Argentine reporter explains Vatican rejection of ambassador

February 12, 2008

The Argentinean press reported last week that the reason given by the Vatican in declining official approval for the country’s newly named ambassador to the Holy See—Alberto Iribarne, a divorced and remarried Catholic—could lead to the naming of a replacement.

Reporter Jose Ignacio Llados of the Buenos Aires daily La Nacion said the lack of approval by the Vatican Secretary of State has irked the government of Cristina Kirchner and has become a new source of tension with the Vatican, “just when it seemed relations had been focused after the meeting between Kirchner and the executive committee of the Bishops’ Conference, led by Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, and the meeting with Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.”

Llados explained that the Argentinean government bears most of the blame for the lack of approval because it ignored the two conditions the Vatican has for the acceptance of an ambassador: that he not harbor anti-religious sentiments and that he not present canonical irregularities if the person in question is Catholic. In the case of Iribarne, the “canonical irregularities” do not relate to his being divorced, but rather to his remarriage outside the Church.

Llados said that while the state has the right to name anyone it wants to be ambassador, the receiving state also has the right to accept or decline. Therefore the solution is in holding preliminary consultations—which was not done by the Argentinean government.

The Argentinean government compiled a list of divorced ambassadors who represent their countries before the Holy See, but it failed to mention that none of them are Catholics and therefore they are not subject to canon law.

“Nobody questioned the moral integrity of Iribarne,” Llados said. “It’s not a moral problem, but rather a canonical irregularity of the designated ambassador.”

The newspaper Clarin reported that Kirchner supporters have confirmed that “there was not even the slightest chance the Vatican would change its position,” as “there is no precedent for granting the placet to a divorced and remarried Catholic, not with this Pope...
or any of the previous ones.” Therefore, Kirchner supporters said, “if the idea is to progress in relations with the Holy See, insisting on Iribarne carries the risk of further deterioration.”

The newspaper reported as well that “the closest case to Iribarne is that of a Nicaraguan official who was granted the placet after it was shown that is annulment case is currently being processed and on the condition that his wife not accompany him during official diplomatic acts until his case has been settled. Iribarne has not opened an annulment process nor does he seem willing to keep his current wife in the background.”
Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, has been outspoken in criticism of the Argentine government. Now Madame President is slapping back:

Buenos Aires, May 15, 2008. CNA The government of Cristina Kirchner has decided to “chastise” Church officials in Argentina for their criticism of its policies by announcing it will cancel a 198 year-old tradition and replace the traditional Te Deum prayer of May 25 at the Cathedral of Buenos Aires with a “multi-religious” ceremony in northern Argentina. Previously the Te Deum has traditionally been prayed at the Cathedral in Buenos Aires to mark important political changes that took place in the country on May 25, 1810. No Argentinean bishop has responded publicly to the decision by the Kirchner administration, but the president of Campus Ministry for Buenos Aires, Father Guillermo Marco—who until recently was spokesman for the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires—told Noticias Argentinas news agency that the move was in response to criticism of the administration by Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio.

Cardinal Bergoglio’s protests against the maneuvering of the Kirchners—especially as regards erosion of the rights of the Church—have an extensive history. So why isn’t Bergoglio hailed as a prophet? Because the government whose excesses he opposes is not a right-wing government, whence the drama of conflict lacks the cinematic appeal that is essential to the story-line. He’s not prophetic; he’s just an obstructionist with a miter. As it happens, Bergoglio is a Jesuit, although the Society of Jesus seems uncharacteristically bashful in its public congratulation of his efforts on behalf of the Church. Will he be picking up honorary degrees at Georgetown and Boston College this year? You make the call.
Vatican talks on Argentine Church-state showdown

May 23, 2008

An Argentine cardinal is traveling to the Vatican for consultations about a Church-state crisis in that country.

Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires will speak with Vatican officials about the decision by Argentina’s President Cristina Kirchner to cancel the traditional Te Deum service that has taken place on May 25, the national day of independence, each year since 1810.

In place of the Catholic service, Kirchner has called for a “multi-faith” religious observance, clearly designed to show her government’s displeasure with the Catholic Church after a series of disagreements over moral issues. The government was also reportedly determined to avoid giving Cardinal Bergoglio an opportunity to deliver another sermon criticizing its policies.

Tensions between the Argentine government and the Catholic Church flared in February, when the government named Alberto Iribarne, a Catholic who is divorced and remarried outside the Church—as ambassador to the Holy See. The Vatican refused to accept his diplomatic credentials.

On his trip to Rome to discuss the latest showdown, Cardinal Bergoglio will be accompanied by two vice-presidents of the nation’s episcopal conference: Archbishops Luis Villalba of Tucumón and Agustín Radrizzani of Mercedes-Luján. The apostolic nuncio in Buenos Aires, Archbishop Adriano Bernardini, is also traveling with the Jesuit cardinal.

President Kirchner is scheduled to visit the Vatican in early June.
Argentine president, Cardinal Bertone air differences

June 03, 2008

Argentina’s President Cristina Kirchner met on June 3 with the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, in an effort to ease Church-state tensions in the Latin American country.

Kirchner, whose government has clashed with the Argentine hierarchy, met with Cardinal Bertone during a UN conference on food, being held in Rome this week, at which the cardinal delivered a message from Pope Benedict XVI.

In a statement released after the meeting, the Vatican said that President Kirchner and Cardinal Bertone had discussed the differences between the Church and the Argentine government—which the statement tactfully described as “various bilateral questions of mutual interest”—and agreed to “face them through frank dialogue and in an atmosphere of sincere collaboration.”

The statement went on to note the “centuries-long role the Catholic Church has played” in Argentina. The mounting tensions between the Kirchner government and the Argentine hierarchy came to a head in May when the government cancelled an annual Te Deum service that has been scheduled on the country’s independence day every year since 1810. Instead of the traditional Catholic service, the government held a “multi-faith” observance, apparently to avoid giving Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio an opportunity to deliver a sermon criticizing national policies.

The Vatican said that Cardinal Bertone had also spoken with President Kirchner about international issues, including the question of food security, which is the topic of the UN meeting in Rome.
Don’t become a ‘cleric of the state,’
Argentinean cardinal warns priests

September 16, 2008

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires uses an interesting figure of
speech—‘clerics of the state’—to remind his priests that they are serving God, not the
government.

Sources

- Don’t become a ‘cleric of the state,’ Argentinean cardinal warns priests
Pope, bishops denounce ‘scandalous’ rate of poverty in Argentina

August 07, 2009

Pope Benedict XVI has weighed in forcefully on the side of the Argentine bishops in their dispute with the country’s government over poverty figures. Echoing a message that the country’s bishops have spread in recent weeks, the Pontiff—in a message for a fundraising event for the Caritas relief agency—said that Argentina must take action “to reduce the scandal of poverty and social inequity.” Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires soon followed up, saying that the “dramatic poverty and unemployment” in the country called for a stronger government response.

Sources

- Pope, bishops denounce ‘scandalous’ rate of poverty in Argentina
- Pope, bishops denounce ‘scandalous’ rate of poverty in Argentina
Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, Argentina, has argued that pastors should baptize children even if their parents are no longer practicing Catholics, or are living in irregular marital situations. “The child has no responsibility for the condition of his parents’ marriage,” the cardinal told the monthly 30 Giorni. The Argentine prelate reasons that the Church should welcome as many members as possible to profit from the sacraments.

Sources

- Argentine cardinal: baptize children even if parents are lapsed Catholics
Argentine bishops speak out against same-sex marriage, urge faithful to demonstrate

July 13, 2010

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires has urged the faithful to participate in a massive rally on July 13 as the nation’s senate discusses the legalization of same-sex marriage.

On Sunday, priests across the nation read at Mass the Argentine bishops’ statement in defense of marriage. “Marriage as a stable relationship between man and woman, who in their diversity complement one another for the transmission and care of life, is a good that does much for the development of persons as well as society,” the bishops noted. “We are not before a private event or religious option, but before a reality that has its root in the very nature of mankind.”

Sources

- Argentine bishops speak out against same-sex marriage, urge faithful to demonstrate
- Argentine bishops speak out against same-sex marriage, urge faithful to demonstrate
- Argentine bishops speak out against same-sex marriage, urge faithful to demonstrate
Argentina legalizes homosexual marriage

July 16, 2010

In a 33-27 vote, Argentina’s senate voted to legalize same-sex marriage on July 15. Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires and other Argentine prelates had urged opposition to the measure, and 60,000 defenders of traditional marriage demonstrated outside the nation’s legislature earlier this week. Argentina is the first Latin American nation to legalize same-sex marriage.

Sources

- Argentina legalizes homosexual marriage
- Argentina legalizes homosexual marriage
Italian magazine publishes insider’s account of 2005 papal conclave

July 28, 2011

The Italian magazine *Limes* has published what is said to be a diary kept by a cardinal during the papal conclave of April 2005.

If a cardinal did indeed keep a diary, and allowed it to become public, he violated the vow of secrecy that is in force at a conclave, and is subject to excommunication.

The Limes document says that Cardinal Ratzinger was the heavy favorite when the conclave began, and only one other prelate—Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires—had substantial backing.

Sources

- Italian magazine publishes insider’s account of 2005 papal conclave
New Evangelization counters ecclesiastical careerism, says Argentine cardinal

February 29, 2012

In an interview with *Vatican Insider*, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires said that the New Evangelization preached by Pope Benedict XVI means that “all ordinary activities of the Church take place in view of the mission.”

Cardinal Bergoglio observed that the New Evangelization in Europe is similar to the “continental mission” declared by the Latin American bishops at a 2007 meeting in Aparecida, Brazil. Since that time, he reported, “the entire continent is a missionary state.”

A renewed sense of mission, the cardinal said, is necessary to “avoid the spiritual sickness of a Church that is wrapped up in its own world.” He contrasted the emphasis on evangelization with a “spiritual worldliness” that leads prelates to think of their careers rather than their vocations.

According to multiple unconfirmed reports, the 75-year-old Cardinal Bergoglio, a Jesuit, was the 2nd-leading vote-getter in the 2005 conclave that elected Pope Benedict XVI.

Sources

- New Evangelization counters ecclesiastical careerism, says Argentine cardinal
New curial posts give extra Vatican clout to several cardinals

April 25, 2012

During the past week Pope Benedict XVI has assigned the newly created cardinals to membership in various Vatican congregations and councils, and added a number of new assignments for other cardinals. Surveying the membership of these Vatican bodies, journalist Sandro Magister observes that several cardinals have multiple assignments, and therefore will exercise considerable influence within the Vatican.

Not surprisingly the Secretary of State, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, leads all cardinals, as a member of six Vatican dicasteries, including the two most important: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Congregation for Bishops. The prefects of the Congregation for Bishops, Cardinal Marc Ouellet, and of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal William Levada, each sit on 4 other congregations, and both are members of those two key dicasteries.

Two other leading Vatican officials—Cardinal Antonio Cañizares Llovera, the prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship; and Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, the prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education—are members of 3 other congregations beside the ones they lead. Among the cardinals outside the Vatican, the leaders of major archdioceses around the world, only two are members of 4 Vatican congregations: Cardinal Angelo Scola of Milan and Cardinal Eugene George of Chicago.

Five cardinals who head major archdiocese are members of 3 congregations: Cardinals Angelo Bagnasco of Genoa, Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, Joachim Meisner of Cologne, Antonio Maria Rouco Varela of Madrid, Christoph Schönborn of Vienna. Two other cardinals who have retired from their pastoral duties remain members of 3 congregations: Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor, the former Archbishop of Westminster (who will relinquish his curial assignments in August when he turns 80); and Cardinal Dionigi Tettamanzi, the former Archbishop of Milan.

Sources

- New curial posts give extra Vatican clout to several cardinals

www.catholicculture.org
September 06, 2012

Using unusually strong language, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires has criticized Catholic pastors who refuse to baptize children born to single mothers. The cardinal expressed his sympathy for a young woman who, after becoming pregnant, resists temptations to abortion and gives birth to the child. Then, he said, she finds herself “on a pilgrimage, going from parish to parish, trying to find someone who would baptize her child.”

The priests who reject this woman, Cardinal Bergoglio, are “hijacking” the sacrament, using rigid rules to preserve their own status, and are likely to “drive God’s people away from salvation.” He likened them to the Pharisees, and reminded them that Jesus regularly condemned the Pharisees, while spending his time with those they regarded as sinners.

“I say this with sadness, and if it sounds like a complaint or an offensive comment please forgive me,” the cardinal said. But he insisted that priests should serve the spiritual needs of the people and not “the interests of religious power.”

Sources

- Argentine cardinal decries priests’ refusal to baptize out-of-wedlock children
- Argentine cardinal decries priests’ refusal to baptize out-of-wedlock children
Argentine Cardinal Bergoglio elected Pope Francis

March 13, 2013

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, Argentina has been elected Pope.

The new Pontiff, who chose the name Pope Francis, is the first Latin American ever to become Roman Pontiff, and the first Jesuit.

The Argentine cardinal was elected on the 5th ballot of the conclave, and white smoke appeared from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel just after 2 pm on Wednesday, March 13. More than an hour lapsed before Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the senior cardinal-deacon, appeared on the central balcony of St. Peter’s basilica to make the traditional announcement: “Habemus papam!”

After another long pause the new Pope appeared, acknowledging the loud applause from more than 200,000 people packed into St. Peter’s Square. In his first remarks he led the crowd in prayers for Pope-emeritus Benedict XVI, then asked for prayers for himself before giving his Urbi et Orbi blessing.

“And now let us begin this journey, the bishop and people, this journey of the Church of Rome which presides in charity over all the churches, a journey of brotherhood in love, of mutual trust,” the new Pope said just before delivering his blessing. “Let us always pray for one another.”

Cardinal Tauran announced, and the new Pope confirmed, that everyone who received the Pope’s fist apostolic blessing—either in person or by a radio, television, or internet broadcast—would receive a plenary indulgence, subject to the usual conditions.

At 76, Pope Francis is old enough so that he had already submitted his resignation as Archbishop of Buenos Aires, as required by canon law. Pope Benedict had not chosen to accept that resignation. But the Argentine prelate’s age was the main reason why he was not prominently listed among the leading papabili going into the conclave.

According to several accounts, Cardinal Bergoglio had won as many as 40 votes in the conclave of 2005, emerging as the leading alternative to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger before the latter was elected as Pope Benedict XVI. The Argentine prelate himself refused to comment on reports about the 2005 votes, saying that he was “confused and a bit hurt” by the knowledge that someone had violated the secrecy of the conclave.
Although some observers at that time saw Cardinal Bergoglio as a “liberal” alternative to the “conservative” Cardinal Ratzinger, the Argentine prelate does not fit a liberal mold. He has been firm in his defense of Church teachings on controversial issues such as abortion and homosexuality, drawing the ire of political radicals in Argentina. He has distanced himself from fellow Jesuits who promoted a leftist political agenda, and shown strong sympathy for the Communion and Liberation movement in Argentina.

Nevertheless the new Pontiff has shown an ability to draw support from different corners of the Catholic world. He is known for his personal humility, which is manifested in his decision to ride buses, live in a spare apartment, and make his own meals. He has a deep commitment to helping the poor, and a passion for evangelization.

By taking the name Francis the new Pope sent a dramatic message, appealing to the millions of people devoted to one of the Catholic world’s most popular saints. That the first Jesuit Pontiff would advance Franciscan spirituality is almost as striking as the reality that a man from Argentina has been named Bishop of Rome.

Born in Buenos Aires on December 17, 1936, Jorge Mario Bergoglio entered the Society of Jesus in 1958 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1969. He became an auxiliary bishop in Buenos Aires in 1992, and coadjutor in 1998, eventually being installed as archbishop in 1999. He was raised to the College of Cardinals by Pope John Paul II in 2001.

While he has served his entire priestly ministry in Argentina, the new Pope is well acquainted with the Vatican. At the time of his election to the papacy he was a member of the Congregations for Divine Worship, the Clergy, and Religious; the Pontifical Council for the Family, and the Pontifical Commission for Latin America. He served as relator general for the Synod of Bishops in October 2001, after the prelate originally appointed to that post, Cardinal Edward Egan of New York, rushed home in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

In his first words to the public, speaking from the balcony of St. Peter’s basilica, Pope Francis—after finally quieting the enthusiastic crowd—remarked that the conclave had the duty of appointing a new Bishop of Rome. “It seems that my brother cardinals have gone almost to the ends of the earth to get him,” he joked, “but here we are.”

Later, after giving his Urbi et Orbi blessing, the Pope spoke simply to the crowd. “We will see one another soon,” he said. “Tomorrow I want to go to pray to the Madonna, that she may protect Rome. Good night and sleep well.”

Sources

www.catholicculture.org
• Argentine Cardinal Bergoglio elected Pope Francis
• Argentine Cardinal Bergoglio elected Pope Francis
About CatholicCulture.org

The chapters of this book appeared first on the Trinity Communications website, CatholicCulture.org.

Our website includes many more Catholic materials, including daily news, commentary, liturgical year resources, Church documents, reviews, and collections of historic Catholic writings and references. You can also sign up for daily and weekly email newsletters.

Trinity Communications is a non-profit corporation. If you would like to support our work, please register and contribute on the website; or mail a check or money order along with your email address to Trinity Communications, P.O. Box 582, Manassas, VA 20108, USA.

We look forward to seeing you at www.catholicculture.org.