



# The Catholic Reporter

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## PNG HIGHLANDS TURNING TO ISLAM ?

By Fr. Franco Zocca  
SVD – Melanesian  
Institute (Goroka)

MY interest in Islam stems from the 14 years I worked in Indonesia, where the great majority of the population is Muslim. When I came to PNG 20 years ago I set aside my interest in Islam since I thought there were no Papua New Guinean Muslims. I discovered that Islam had arrived in PNG about 15 years ago when I read a newspaper report that a mosque had opened near Kimbe in West New Britain. I visited it, and to my surprise, found that the new Muslim converts were Simbu people—originally Catholic—who worked on an oil palm plantation.

Later, I discovered that those Simbus were not the first Papua New Guineans to turn to Islam. The registration of the Islamic Society in PNG in December 1983 confirmed Islam as a permitted religion and from that time on, expatriate Muslims began recruiting (*da'wah*) locally. By 1986 four Papua New Guineans had pronounced the *Sahadah* (Act of Faith) and become followers of Islam. The first was a young man from Bougainville, who was given the Arabic name *Bilal*, which means "dark". Four years later, according to the 1990 census, there were already 440 Muslim residents in PNG. By the year 2000, their number had risen to 756, of whom 476 were PNG citizens. Interestingly, out of the total of 756, 293 were living in Port Moresby, 204 in Simbu and 65 in West New Britain. Other pockets of Muslim citizens could be found in Morobe (56), Western Province (27), Western Highlands (25), West Sepik (23), and East New Britain (13).

What is the situation in 2013? Although the National Statistical Office (NSO) has not yet released the 2011 census figures that give a breakdown of people's religious affiliation, I recently visited the Islamic Centre in Port Moresby and interviewed the leaders of the Islamic Society of PNG. They estimated the local Muslim population to be about 4,000. We will see whether this number is confirmed by the census results.

The Islamic leaders in Port Moresby said that Islam was growing especially quickly in the Highlands, particularly so in Simbu (the leaders of the Islamic Society of PNG are all from Simbu). New converts were coming from the districts of Gumine, Nomane, Chuave and Kerowagi—places where the people generally became either Catholic or Lutheran at the arrival of Western missionaries and Australian colonizers. They also said that people around Mendi and in the Hela region were interested in Islam.

When I asked the leaders why Papua New Guineans were converting to Islam, they gave several reasons, such as the respectable conduct of Muslims, the prohibition of alcohol and other intoxicating substances, and religious guidelines that give order and direction to the whole life of believers. They were also strongly of the opinion that Islamic beliefs and practices are more compatible than Christianity with traditional Melanesian values and customs. As examples they cited Islam's acceptance of polygamy, the separation of men and women, avoidance of menstruating women, male supremacy, not walking behind women, and men's wearing of beards and moustaches.



NOW Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI receives a PNG *bilum* from Abp. John Ribat MSC of Port Moresby at the Vatican on 9 June 2012 at the end of the *Ad Limina* Visit of the Catholic Bishops of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Pope Benedict XVI retired on 28 February this year after almost eight years as leader of the Catholic Church. He will turn 86 on 16 April 2013. See Page 4 for more.

I also asked about barriers local people faced in becoming Muslim. The leaders cited the importance of pigs in social life and bride price, and modern Western influences on young people. It is not easy to convince modern Melanesian women to wear the *jilbab* (traditional Muslim dress for women) or men to renounce alcohol and pork. Another stumbling block is the bad name that Muslims have in the media, where Islam is frequently linked to fanaticism, terrorism and anti-modernism.

The Muslim community in PNG is currently served by 15 Islamic centres led by imams (leaders). Young Papua New Guinean Mus-

lims have been sponsored to study overseas in Koranic schools in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Fiji. When they return they will provide their Islamic communities with much needed imams, teachers, scholars and Koranic lawyers. In the meantime Muslim children are instructed in the Islamic Faith and the Arabic language on Saturdays and Sundays.

It is still not easy to live as Muslims in PNG. For example, Islamic directives with regard to food and slaughtering of animals are not followed by local shop owners and butchers; pupils and workers are not allowed to interrupt what they are

doing to perform the prescribed daily prayers and the Friday Noon Prayer at the mosque; and Muslims wearing the prescribed dress have been verbally and physically abused in public.

In early 2002, the Secretary of the Commission on Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, Fr Bill Fey OFM Cap., together with other Catholic representatives, began meeting with representatives of the Islamic community. This Catholic-Muslim dialogue has continued, with some interruptions, up to the present. Fr Bill Fey, now Bishop of Kimbe, is still

the main interlocutor on the Catholic side.

For Christian communities in PNG, and especially the Catholic ones, the rise of Islam in PNG raises some important and disturbing questions. Have Christian roots penetrated deeply or is Christianity only a superficial covering? What was lacking that young people educated in Christian institutions, and even in seminaries, are now turning to Islam? How can we face the challenges presented by the growing presence of Islam among our people? Perhaps this matter could be a topic of discussion at various levels within the Catholic Church in PNG.



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To contribute news items to Catholic Reporter, please contact:

Fr. Giorgio Licini, PIME  
giorgiolicini@yahoo.com  
Tel.: 422 3928 Mob.: 7362 2950

Terence Aisi terencea@catholic.org.pg  
Tel.: 325 9577 Mob.: 763 77422

Veronica Hatutasi vhatutasi@wantok.com.pg  
Tel.: 325 25200 Mob.: 7273 9408

# The Teaching of the Second Vatican Council

## BAPTISMAL DIGNITY OF ALL

By Fr Roger Purcell MSC  
National Director, Com-  
munity Animation Service

THE rights and duties as members of the Church for participation in the life and mission of the church are based on baptism, rather than ordination or religious profession. This has consequences for the laity in their call to ministry and mission to transform the world. It creates for us a new equality of relationships in the Church.

The realization and steady growth of this basic and profound equality and the right and duty to be active participating members of the Church in its life and mission took many years. It was expressed in the Council in the debates, discussions and documents.

This was taken up strongly in the Council being ex-

pressed in its documents. In the formation of Lumen Gentium the chapter on People of God was deliberately placed before that on Priests, to emphasize our equality in baptism as one people.

- "The laity, too, share in the priestly, prophetic and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own role to play in the mission of the whole People of God in the Church and in the world." [AA2]
- "The laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God." [LG 31]
- "Laymen... are to be a leaven animating temporal affairs from within, disposing them always to become as Christ would

have them." (AD15).

- "As members of the living Christ, all the faithful are duty-bound to cooperate in the expansion and spreading out of His Body." [AG 36]

Scripture: Mk 1: 16-18; 1 Cor 12: 4-6

In the culture of the world today, there is growing awareness of and promotion of the dignity and rights of each individual person. We recognize the human and baptismal dignity of all, and the contribution that each one can have in the work and mission of the Church. However we still see in the world great injustice, oppression and denial of people's rights and dignity.

In the Church we find too the attitudes of clericalism and superiority of priests present in many places in the Church, promoted and

accepted by both clergy and laity. We see also competition and conflict between groups, ministries and organizations in dioceses, parishes and communities. We are called to participation and co-responsibility in the mission and life of the Church. This calls for respect for each other and attitudes and actions of collaboration and cooperation.

Reflection and discussion: Building communion in the Church requires respect for each other, our charisms, roles and functions.

- How do we fail in this regard, and what more do we need to do?
- How can we show respect for the human and baptismal dignity of all our brothers and sisters in our ministry, structures and lives in our community?



## O'Neill praises Church effort at DWU graduation



Prime Minister: Peter O'Neill

By Bradley Gregory  
- DWU Madang

PRIME Minister Peter O'Neill has praised Christian Churches in Papua New Guinea for their role in the development of the country.

Speaking at the Divine Word University's 32nd Graduation ceremony on 3rd March this year, Mr. O'Neill said that Churches have contributed significantly to the development of PNG particularly in the areas of Health and Education. "Where will our country be, without the work of our churches," he said.

Acknowledging that the government had limitations, the Prime Minister said that the churches were able to provide services to the people mainly in the rural areas.

The Catholic Church along with other Christian Churches runs many Aid posts and Health centers and schools including Divine Word University.

Meanwhile, Mr O'Neill told the gathering that the greatest investment of every nation is its young men and women, and educating them at the highest level is a priority.

The University President, Fr. Jan Czuba SVD on the other hand challenged the outgoing students to have a heart for service, and to courageously do whatever best for people and what matters most. He said, "Graduates, do not forget the word 'community'. It is one that will make demand on you".

The University graduated almost 700 students, the highest in its history. Besides Prime Minister Peter O'Neill, the ceremony was attended by Australian Deputy High Commissioner, Margaret Adamson, West New Britain Governor Sasindran Muthuel, the University Council and representatives from Australian universities.

# Second priest ordained for the Michaelites in PNG



The ordination of Fr. Kenneth Londe Kaimalan CSMA on 30 January 2013 at Wanepap, Enga. He is the second national member of the Congregation to be ordained a priest.

By Fr. Ziggy Kruczek  
CSMA

DEACON Kenneth Londe Kaimalan was ordained a priest for the Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel (CSMA) on 30 January this year at his native Wanepap parish in Enga province.

He is the second national member for the Congregation to be ordained a priest.

He did his first three-year study course at Fatima Good Shepherd Seminary, Jiwaka province; then after one year of pastoral work and one of

novitiate he continued his four-year theology program at St. Charles Borromeo Diocesan Seminary in Vanimo.

In 2012, after making his final profession, he was ordained a deacon and took the opportunity to serve at Kuli Parish, Archdiocese of Mount Hagen, until mid January 2013.

The ordaining prelate was Bishop Arnold Orowae of Wabag with Bishop Cesare Bonivento PIME of Vanimo as co-ordinating bishop.

A number of lay Catholics also arrived from Vanimo to

show appreciation for the event and thank God for calling another New Guinean to serve as a priest.

They added to the about sixty priests and 1500 people in attendance from Enga and Western Highlands provinces where the Michaelites mostly serve.

The Congregation was well represented by Fr. Leszek Przybylski, a General Counsellor from Poland, Fr. Janusz Bieniek, Superior of the Michaelite General Delegation in the Pacific and seminarian

Pawel Gorzkowski, both based in Australia. Early the next day Bishop Andrzej Dzióba of Łowicz, Poland also arrived.

At the first Mass of the newly ordained priest the next day, Bishop Bonivento of Vanimo challenged not only Fr. Kenneth but all present saying that holiness is a primary constituent in Christian life.

There are now four Polish Michaelites in Papua New Guinea, two national priests and one brother, and two seminarians.

# Insights from the Rabaul Diocesan Assembly

By Abp. Francesco Panfilo SDB - Rabaul

IN the Apostolic Letter "Novo Millennio Ineunte" (2001), Blessed John Paul II asked the whole Church to "set out into the deep" – "Duc in altum". This is the theme I chose for myself at the beginning of my ministry as Bishop. It is a pastoral program for me, but it is also a challenge to all Catholic faithful: individually and as a community.

"These words invite us to remember the past with gratitude, to live the present with enthusiasm and to look forward to the future with confidence" (Novo Millennio Ineunte, 1).

## 1. Time to remember the past with gratitude!

Our recent Diocesan Assembly (26 Jan. 2013) gave us the opportunity to look back and remember, with gratitude, those who brought the faith to our Archdiocese. Missionaries brought the light of the Gospel and many other good things. Many of them died when they were still young, decimated by fatigue, malaria and other tropical sicknesses. Some of them, like the *Baining martyrs*, shed their blood.

Perhaps, in the process of establishing the Church and spreading the Good News, some mistakes were committed. Can we look at these mistakes of the past in a positive light? Can we leave the past behind and move on from here? We may have to seek for forgiveness for our mistakes, and to offer forgiveness to those who wronged us. "Offer forgiveness, receive peace!" (J.P. II).

## 2. Time to live the present with enthusiasm!

After remembering the past, we ask ourselves: "Where are we as a Diocese?" Now is the time for all of us: laity, consecrated persons, and clergy, to assess our fervour and find fresh enthusiasm for our spiritual and pastoral responsibilities. Now is the time to reflect on what the Spirit is telling us, to deepen our faith and to profess the faith without fear. This means that we must strive for **HOLINESS**; it means, too, that we must give importance to **Prayer, to the Sunday Eucharist**, and it means that we must **listen to and proclaim the Word of God**.

## 3. Time to look at the future with confidence

The Assembly approved a five years Diocesan Pastoral Plan (2013 – 2017). It is an important step toward a bright future for the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Rabaul.

Our Vision is "that we believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ" (1Jn 3:23a). And our mission is to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19a).

This can be achieved only if we all work together in the spirit of "communio": lay faithful, consecrated men and women, and clergy.

**DUC IN ALTUM!** Let us set out into the deep! We can count on the power of the same Spirit who was poured out at Pentecost and who urges us still today to start out anew, sustained by the hope "which does not disappoint" (Rom 5:5). On this journey we are accompanied by the Blessed Virgin - Star of the Sea - the radiant dawn and sure guide for our steps and by the intercession of our martyr, Blessed Peter To Rot.

## The threefold mission of "God's family"

(*Deus caritas est 25 & Pastores dabo vobis 43*)

### PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Jesus is our Teacher: *God's family gives witness to its faith*

We can be sure that if evangelization and catechesis are done well in our diocese, everything else will be easier to do.

In order to arrive at an acceptable knowledge of the content of the faith, we have at our disposal two precious tools: the **Bible** and the **Catechism of the Catholic Church**.

Jesus Christ does not come to destroy any culture, rather, his teachings, combined with the positive values of culture, purify and complete what is defective. It is our task to take a good look at culture and cultural values and preserve and purify those things that are good and leave aside those things which are not good.

### CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENTS

Jesus is our Priest: *God's family celebrates its faith*

"All the sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the **Eucharist** and are directed towards it. For in the most blessed Eucharist is contained the entire spiritual wealth of the Church, namely Christ himself our living bread, who gives life to humanity through his flesh - that flesh which is given life and gives life by the Holy Spirit. Thus men and women are invited and led to offer themselves, their works and all creation in union with Christ". (*Sacramentum Caritatis 16*).

### BUILDING THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN CHARITY

Jesus is our Shepherd: *God's family lives its faith*

The call to discipleship is a vocation to **Communion**. All are called to a union of love with God and with one another. In other words, all – without exception – are called to **HOLINESS**, the perfection of charity (see *Lumen Gentium 32*).

Authority in the Church is hierarchical, but those who belong to the clerical state should not fear losing their authority or their power if they allow the consecrated persons and the laity to play their respective role within the Church.

For certain structures such as the *Council of Priests*, the *Parish Pastoral Council*, and the *Diocesan Pastoral Council* to function, the relationship between Bishop and Priests, between Parish Priests and the entire People of God, between Clergy and Religious, between associations and ecclesial movements should be characterized by this *spirituality of communion*.

At times, we do sacrifice ourselves for our own tribe, clan and/or village, but we are unable to go beyond the clan and see that, by faith, we belong to a much bigger community. Through Baptism all of us became children of God. Through Baptism we all become members of the Body of Christ. The Church becomes our family, is our community, it is, in a sense, our clan, our tribe.

Commentary  
by  
Fr. Victor Roche,  
SVD



## Pope Benedict's resignation a positive step

Pope Benedict XVI stunned the world last month by announcing to the Cardinals and to the world that he would step down as Pope on 28th February this year. He in fact did say farewell to the Vatican and he is now residing in Castel Gandolfo, outside Rome. He took this decision after a lot of praying and discerning. In the last 598 years no Pope has resigned. All of them died while in office. This decision shows his humility and courage. It also shows his love for the Church, which he shepherded as the head of the worldwide 1.2 billion Catholics for the last 8 years.

On Wednesday, 27th February he gave his last public audience which was attended by Church leaders and about 150,000 people in St. Peter's square in Rome. The 85 year old Pontiff told the crowd, "The Lord gave us days of sun and of light breeze, days in which the fishing was good. There were also moments when there were stormy waters and headwinds... as if God was sleeping. But I always knew that God was in that boat and I always knew that the boat of the Church is not mine, is not ours, but is His and he will not let it sink".

On Thursday, 28th February he was farewelled by the Cardinals and the staff of the Vatican. It was indeed an emotional fare well after 8 years of his reign as Pope. He was then taken by a helicopter to Castel Gandolfo, the Summer Residence of the Popes. He also said goodbye to the people gathered there and that was his last public appearance as Pope. That day he started his last journey on the earth, away from the public. He likes to spend the rest of his life studying and praying.

The General Assembly of Cardinals is taking place in the Vatican this first week of March. They will also decide when the election of the new Pope is going to start. Out of the 207 Cardinals expected to come to Rome, 117 are Cardinal electors, those eligible to elect the new Roman Pontiff. They will do it in a 'Conclave' (close door meeting) and all of them will take an oath of secrecy before they elect the new Pope; a process in which the Holy Spirit has the final say. The candidate who gathers a two third majority from the cardinal electors and accepts their decision will be the new Pope. He is expected to be elected in time to lead the liturgies of the Holy Week which start on 24th March with Palm Sunday.

The resignation of Pope Benedict XVI has opened the gates for future Popes to resign if they wish to. It is also a positive signal for the Bishops to step down if the situation suggests so.

There are some prophets of doom, especially from other churches, who want to make use of this occurrence to spread wrong rumors about the Catholic Church. But the Church founded by Jesus Christ continues on...

## Want to do a better pastoral work? Study Vatican II!

By Br. Peter Ryan FSP –  
Federation of Religious

28 FEB 2013. Nineteen Sisters and Brothers from eleven different religious congregations representing all four regions of Papua New Guinea are currently upgrading their pastoral skills at Xavier Institute in Bomana, Port Moresby. The diploma course in Pastoral Work began on February 3rd and is an initiative of the Federation of Religious of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Rosary Sister Gertrude Atua from Wewak Diocese is coordinating this eighteen month course which includes one full semester of field experience. Key presenters are Fr. Joe Ensing MSC and Sr. Brenda Nash OLSH from the diocese of Alotau. Br. Richard Magoepulia OFM says, "So far the course has examined the

major themes of the Second Vatican Council (1962-'64) to discover the purpose of the Church and reflect on the stages of its growth." He described how participants are looking at the spirituality necessary for ministry in the present day model of church.

"We also experience practical ways of presenting in our home parishes the vision of Church encouraged by the earlier self-study of the Catholic Church in PNG after the Second Vatican Council."

The course is also exploring the aims and outcomes of the more recent National Assembly of the Catholic Church in PNG, "We are Church – Alive in Christ" (2004).

The relationship between the Catholic Church and other Christian churches is also a focus for these keen pastoral workers.



Participants in the diploma course in Pastoral Work at Xavier Institute, Bomana, NCD

# BENEDICT XVI, NOT THE FIRST POPE TO RESIGN!

(Vatican Radio). NO Pope has resigned in almost 600 years. But Pope Benedict's surprise announcement is not entirely unprecedented. 265 men have reigned as Pope since Saint Peter was martyred in Rome in the third decade after the death of Christ, and at least four of them have resigned. Vatican Radio spoke to medieval historian Dr. Donald Prudlo, Associate Professor of History at Jacksonville State University in Alabama, about the history of papal resignations.

**VATICAN RADIO. It's been centuries since a Pope has resigned the See of Peter. Can you tell us about the last Pope to resign?**

DR. PRUDLO: The last Pope to resign was almost six hundred years ago (1415). It was Pope Gregory XII, who, in a very sacrificial gesture offered to resign so that the council of Constance could assume his power and appoint a new Pope, and in so doing bring an end the Great Western Schism. That was the last Pope who actually resigned. So this is quite an unprecedented event.

**VATICAN RADIO. At one point there was a question of whether it was possible for a Pope to resign. When and how did the Church determine that this was possible?**

DR. PRUDLO: At the end of the 13th century, a very holy hermit named Peter was elected as Pope Celestine V in order to break a deadlock in the Conclave that had lasted nearly three years. He was elected because of his personal holiness, sort of a unity candidate. And once he got there, being a hermit, not used to the ways of the Roman Curia, he found himself somewhat unsuited to the task, that it wasn't just holiness but also some shrewdness and prudence that was also required. So within six months he knew that he was really unequal to the task, and so he gathered the Cardinals together in a Consistory, just as was recently done by Pope

Benedict XVI, and he announced to them his intention to resign. Because of the Pope's position as the supreme authority in the Church, Celestine declared that the Pope could freely resign, that it was permissible, and that, because, as supreme authority, it did not have to be accepted by anyone. It just had to be freely manifested, as it says today in Canon 332 of the Code of Canon Law. As long as it is freely and properly manifested it is to be accepted by no one. The Pope is the supreme authority. Because of this, his successor Boniface VIII in his redaction of Canon Law called the Liber Sextus inserted this Constitution of Celestine V and it became normative Catholic law.

**VATICAN RADIO. Pope Celestine V was later canonised. Can you tell us a little more about this Pope?**

DR. PRUDLO: Celestine V was recognised by all as an extremely holy man. He was sort of the right man at the wrong time. And because of that, because of his personal holiness, because of his great virtue, he was later elevated to the honours of the altar. And this brings us to an interesting question: What happened to this Pope when he resigned? There was no precedent for this. And so, what happened was that his successor Boniface VIII granted Pope Celestine V sort of a hermit's cell where he could watch over him. Some have called it an imprisonment; it was really more of a putting him under supervision. And Celestine V himself was very happy with this; he humbly acquiesced to this as it was much more like the hermit life that he had loved so much.

**VATICAN RADIO. Although it's possible for a Pope to resign, it has happened very rarely. Can you tell us about some of the other Popes who have resigned?**

DR. PRUDLO: Well, Celestine V and his advisors were aware that this was an unusual process. And so what they

did is they went back through history, they looked at the Liber Pontificalis, and they could go all the way back to Pope St. Pontian, in 235, one of the first bishops of Rome, who was arrested and sent to the salt mines, and in order for a successor to be able to be elected in Rome, he resigned his office. And so as early as 235 we have evidence of the possibility of Popes resigning for the good of the Church. Several others, they tried to force them to resign. The Byzantines attempted to force Pope Silverius to resign, but he refused to. But that also demonstrates the possibility of resignation. And then, at a rather low point in the Church's history, Pope Benedict IX, in the 1040s, resigned and attempted to re-acquire the papacy several times. But according to good reports, he too died in penance at the monastery of Grottaferrata outside of Rome.

**VATICAN RADIO. Finally, can you tell us a little bit about the significance of this decision, and maybe give us some historical insight into Pope Benedict's pontificate?**

DR. PRUDLO: The important thing is that the Catholic Church is such a historically rooted Church that we do have things to look to in order to deal with an event of this type. As unusual as it is, we can look back at the examples that I just spoke about and know that the laws which govern these things have been long established in Catholic canon law. And so, for instance, the rules regarding the conclave that is about to come up have been rehearsed for nearly a millennium. And the Pope Blessed John Paul II in his Constitution Universi Dominici gregis, once again re-affirmed these things that have been thought about and discussed for an exceptionally long time.

The Church has the resources and the experience to meet these challenging situations. (Vatican Radio, 11 Feb. 2013 – News.va)

## Some FAQ's on the Pope's Resignation

**BENEDICT XVI's renunciation has raised many questions, and not only in the Catholic world. Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican press office, has given several press conferences since the Pope announced his resignation on Feb. 11. Following is a quick and brief selection of some questions and answers from Fr. Lombardi and other sources:**

**What is Pope Benedict XVI's name and title now that he has resigned the papacy. Where is he going to leave?**

He will be called Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. After a few months at the Pope's summer palace of Castel Gandolfo, south Rome, he will transfer to a former small monastery inside the Vatican. He has pledged to devote the remaining years of his life to prayer for the Church.

**How old is now Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI?**

He will be turning 86 on 16 April 2013.

**Does Benedict XVI have some serious**

**illness in particular? Is it true that he has a pacemaker?**

Yes, he has had a heart pacemaker since he was Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. A few weeks ago the batteries of his pacemaker were replaced. But he only cited general frailty and failing strength as a reason for his resignation.

**Is provision made in the Church for a Pope's renunciation?**

Yes, a Pope's resignation is provided for and regulated by the Code of Canon Law.

**When is the conclave to elect the new Pope beginning?**

Around the middle of March this year.

**Will Benedict XVI take part in the Conclave to elect his successor?**

No, Benedict XVI will not take part in the Conclave to elect his successor and he will not be part of the College of Cardinals.

**How is Benedict XVI dressing now?**

He is wearing a simple white cassock and brown shoes.

**Who will live with Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI in the convent inside the Vatican after his retirement?**

A group of consecrated ladies, who were already helping him in his apartment at the Vatican; and his private secretary, Abp. Georg Gänswein.

**Are there power struggles in the Vatican?**

In all institutions there is a dynamic that leads to different opinions, which is always good. However, such differences should not be given too much weight as they would not correspond to the reality or to persons' intentions. It is true, however, that media have strongly portrayed a scenario of conflicts inside the Vatican in last few months.

**Will Benedict XVI meet with the new Pope?**

That is quite likely, though there is no plan yet as when Benedict XVI may meet with the new Pope. (Main source: zenit.org)



18 April 2005: Black smoke from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican. Card. Joseph Ratzinger will be elected Pope the next day with the name of Benedict XVI.

## Shock on Facebook

THE reaction on Vatican Radio's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/VaticanRadio-English) to the announcement that Pope Benedict XVI intended to resign on Feb. 28th has been one of shock.

One of the first comments to the announcement was "Hacked??" After the news began to be confirmed by the world's media, the comments turned to prayer ("May God Bless you always Pope Benedict XVI. :)"; "Praying for the pope."; "May the Lord protect you Holy father for the good work you have done"; "Will Pray for Pope Benedict and his successor". Several posters just wrote the word "sad".

One comment read, "I am heartbroken at the news. I looked up to Pope Benedict as a spiritual father, and his witness to Christ made me the man I am today."

Another person sympathised with the Pope's stated reasons for resigning: "I watched a documentary of 'A Day In The Life Of Pope Benedict' and it was a

very busy schedule for someone his age. Much busier than most of us, so maybe he needs a little time to himself, God Bless Him!"

One listener from Brazil wrote: "I was sad, but God knows what he does. Despite the Pope's decision, we are at your side and support their decisions."

It should not be easy to resign was certainly a difficult decision. We are with him and praying for him. Need a very loving church to do what he did.

We love the pope in the same way!! Whether he was the first to resign from Gregory XII. He resigned for love, recognizing that no longer had the strength.

May God bless you and enlighten you always!! We love you, Pope Benedict!! We are with you until the end!! A big brotherly hug from Brazil! (Vatican Radio, 12 Feb. 2013 – News.va)

## How the Pope is elected

POPE Benedict XVI's resignation set in motion a complex sequence of events to elect the next leader of the Roman Catholic Church.

The laws governing the selection after a Pope's resignation are the same as those in force after a papal death, aside from skipping a period of mourning. Here is the procedure:

— The Vatican summons a conclave (close door session) of cardinals that must begin 15-20 days after Benedict's Feb. 28 resignation.

— By the time the conclave is scheduled to start, the cardinals eligible to vote — all those under the age of 80 unless absent for serious reasons — are expected to be within Vatican City, take an oath of secrecy and not leave until the new Pope is elected. There are currently 117 cardinals under the age 80.

— Any baptized Roman Catholic male is eligible for election as Pope, but only cardinals have been selected since 1378.

— Two ballots are held each morning and two each afternoon in the Sistine Chapel. A two-thirds majority is required.

— Ballots are burned after each round. Black smoke from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel, where the cardinals are gathered, means no decision; white smoke signals that cardinals have chosen a Pope and he has accepted. Bells also signal the election of a Pope to help avoid possible confusion over color of smoke.

— The new Pope is introduced from the loggia overlooking St. Peter's Square with the words Habemus Papam! (Latin for "We have a pope!"). Then he imparts his first blessing.

— After a few days, normally on a Sunday, the new Pope is formally installed as Bishop of Rome and supreme shepherd of the universal Church.