



What happens when the Pope dies or the See is vacant because of his resignation?

A cardinal in the papal household who assumes provisional governance of the Vatican until the Pope's successor has been elected.

The current camerlengo is **Kevin Farrell**, from Ireland

The **camerlengo** summons all the cardinals (including those over 80) for the **preparatory meetings** for the conclave.

They meet daily until the start of the conclave to address urgent Church matters and prepare the process



CONCLAVE

Named by the Pope. They are members of the Sacred College who have the task of electing the Pope, advising him, assisting and collaborating with him in different ways.

From the Latin **cum clave**, which means **"with a key."** The **cardinals** gather in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican to prayerfully discern who should be the new Pope. It's much bigger than just a moment in history.

Isolated from the world, without phones or cameras, **in silence and prayer**. It's a time to invoke the Holy Spirit and let Him guide their hearts.

THERE ARE 138 CARDINAL ELECTORS
(under 80 years old)

INITIAL PHASES

1

After a period of **15 to 20 days from the vacancy**, the rite of the conclave begins with the celebration of the Mass *Pro eligendo Pontifice*, presided over by the camerlengo.

2

That same afternoon, the cardinal electors gather in the Pauline Chapel, and from there, process in choir dress to the Sistine Chapel, **invoking the Holy Spirit** with the *Veni Creator Spiritus*.

3

One by one, the cardinals touch the Holy Gospels to swear that they will **faithfully keep the secrecy of the election** and that, if elected, they will faithfully carry out the Petrine ministry.

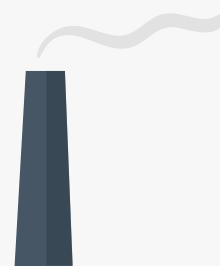
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The Master of Pontifical Liturgical Celebrations then proclaims: "Extra omnes." Everyone except the electors and authorized personnel must **leave the room** after this.



THE ELECTION

The election of a Pope is not a poll, a war of ideologies, or a matter of opinion. **It is a sacred moment.** When all the cardinals have voted, they verify that the number of ballots matches the number of electors. Then the ballots are shuffled and the names are read aloud, with the results recorded. This way, the cardinals know if any candidate has reached the required majority (*two thirds of the total votes*).



HOW DO WE FIND OUT WHEN THE POPE IS ELECTED?

If one of the candidates has obtained the required majority, **white smoke** is released from the chapel chimney.

WHAT IF THERE'S NO WHITE SMOKE?

From the second day onward, two votes are held in the morning and two in the afternoon. If there is no positive result after three days, the voting is suspended for a day for prayer, conversation among voters, and a spiritual exhortation by the first cardinal deacon.

If there is still no result after seven more votes, the first cardinal priest gives another spiritual exhortation. If there is still no consensus after seven more votes, the first cardinal bishop gives one.

If the two-thirds majority is still not reached, the camerlengo consults the cardinal electors on how to proceed, and the decision is made by absolute majority. From that moment, only the two most-voted candidates from the last ballot can be voted on, and the elected candidate must receive a two-thirds majority. Voting continues until this is achieved.



"HABEMUS PAPAM"

The appointment is announced:

The first cardinal deacon appears on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica and announces to the people: *"Habemus Papam."*

Apostolic blessing:

After the announcement, the new Pope appears publicly and gives his first apostolic blessing.

Let's pray for the future Pope, that he may listen to the voice of God, love his Church, and serve with all his heart.