



# ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

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## POPES: QUICK FACTS

- 265 Popes, from St. Peter to Pope Benedict XVI
  - He and Pope John Paul II were the first non-Italians elected to the papacy since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century (1522)
  - It has been the custom for a Pope to choose a new name for at least 1,000 years, though it is not required
  - The Pope lives in Rome because he is the successor of St. Peter who was the Bishop of Rome. Rome is also the city where both Saints Peter and Paul were martyred.
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### **Does the Pope Have to Take a New Name?**

No. The first Pope to change his name was Mercury, in 533, who chose John II. The custom became the norm over 1,000 years ago. Pope Benedict XVI is the 265<sup>th</sup> Pope since St. Peter.

### **Which Pope Was the Last...**

- Non-cardinal elected: Pope Urban VI (1378)
- Non-bishop elected: Pope Gregory XVI (1831) (he was a cardinal-deacon)
- German Pope: Pope Adrian VI Adriaan Florisz Boeyens 1522–1523
- Laymen elected Pope: Benedict VIII (1012-1024)

### **Does the Pope Have to be a Bishop?**

No. Any baptized Catholic man who is not a heretic, in schism or known for simony can be elected, although the last non-bishop to be elected was Gregory XVI, in 1831

### **Can a Pope Resign?**

It really doesn't happen. The last Pope to resign was Pope Celestine V (1294), who was an elderly, prayerful hermit; there had been no Pope since 1292 and he warned God would punish the cardinals if they didn't elect someone immediately. He was elected by the 11 cardinals; he named 13 more and he affirmed the rules for the conclave, passed in 1274, that referred to any vacancy, not just that due to death. He resigned, planning to return to his hermitage, but his successor, Boniface VIII, ordered him confined to a tower where Celestine died.

### **Why Does the Pope Live in Rome?**

Since the Pope is the successor of St. Peter who was the Bishop of Rome, he like St. Peter, lives in Rome. Rome is also the city where both Saints Peter and Paul were martyred.