Habemus Papam!

Pope Francis • March 13, 2013

Jorge Mario Bergoglio was born on December 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, one of five children of Italian immigrants. After entering the seminary of Villa Devoto, Buenos Aires, he joined the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) on March 11, 1958. He was ordained on December 13, 1969.

After several years of teaching, Bergoglio served as Provincial for Argentina for the Society of Jesus from 1973-1979 before going to Germany to finish his doctoral dissertation. In 1992, he was appointed auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires, and was consecrated on June 27 of that year by Cardinal Antonio Quarracino, archbishop of Buenos Aires. His episcopal motto was "Miserando atque eligendo" ("lowly, and yet chosen").

Bergoglio succeeded Cardinal Quarracino as Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998, and was created cardinal by Blessed John Paul II in the consistory of February 21, 2001. As both bishop and cardinal, Bergoglio was known for his humility, intellect, and commitment to the poor. He opted to live in a small apartment rather than the bishop's residence, and gave up the limousine provided him in favor of public transportation.

Cardinal Bergoglio participated in the conclave of April 18-19, 2005, which elected Pope Benedict XVI. In 2005, he was elected president of the Episcopal Conference of Argentina from 2005-2008, and again from 2008-2011. On February 23, 2013, he was named a member of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

After the resignation of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on February 28, 2013, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, SJ, was elected on the second day of the conclave on March 13, 2013. He took as his name Francis.

St. Francis, founder of the Franciscan order, is one of the world's most beloved saints in popular devotion, and is known for his solidarity with the poor and his emphasis on caring for God's creation. In selecting a name from the Franciscan, rather than the Jesuit, tradition, it is speculated that Pope Francis wished to set a tone for his papacy of unity among all Christians, emphasize concern for the poor and environmental stewardship, and build a bridge between the traditionally European papacy and the rest of the world.

In addition to being the first pontiff to take the name of Francis, Pope Francis is also the first member of the Society of Jesus to be elected pope, the first pope born in the Americas, and the first non-European pope in over 1200 years.

Born: December 17, 1936
Ordained a priest: December 13, 1969
Ordained Archbishop of Buenos Aires: February 28, 1998
Created Cardinal: February 21, 2001
Elected to the Office of Universal Shepherd: March 13, 2013