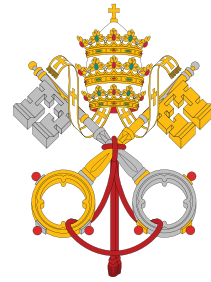


Meet Pope Francis

*“Jesus teaches us another way: Go out.
Go out and share your testimony...Go out and share.”*
~ Pope Francis



About his life ~

Jorge Mario Bergoglio was born on December 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. His parents, Regina Maria Sivori and Mario Jose Bergoglio, had moved from Italy to this South American country where they raised their family of three sons and two daughters. When he was a teenager, Jorge suffered a serious infection and had one of his lungs removed when he was 21. He recovered his health and, after graduating from high school, went to college to study chemistry. Over the course of his life and studies, he learned to speak five languages—Spanish, Italian, English, French, and German.

About his vocation ~

When he was 32 he entered the Society of Jesus, a Catholic order of priests and brothers who dedicate their lives to bringing the Good News of Jesus to others throughout the world through education, missionary work, and spiritual practices that look for God’s presence in the midst of ordinary life. Becoming a Jesuit involves a lot of study and prayer. On December 13, 1969, Jorge was ordained a priest. In 1998, he was appointed the Archbishop of Buenos Aires. In his role as leader of the archdiocese, he was a firm protector of those who were poor and worked to ease their suffering. He lived simply and was often seen riding the city bus. The motto he chose for his archdiocese was “Lowly but Chosen.” In 2001, Pope John Paul II made him a Cardinal.

About his election as pope ~

When Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation, Cardinal Bergoglio joined the other Cardinals from throughout the world for the conclave in Rome. After five ballots, he was elected pope. His election makes him the first pope from South America and the first Jesuit pope.

When a pope is elected, he chooses a name, usually of a previous pope or saint that the new pope admires and wants to emulate. Cardinal Bergoglio picked a name no other pope has used: Francis. Because of his commitment to the poor and dedication to a life of simplicity, the example of Saint Francis of Assisi is a wonderful choice for our new pope.

About his call to follow Jesus ~

Even though Pope Francis is just beginning his role in the Catholic Church as its leader, he has already reminded us of Jesus’ call to be of service to one another. After his election, he came onto the balcony to greet the people gathered in Saint Peter’s Square. Before blessing them, he first asked for their prayers. Then he raised his hands and offered the following words:

“And now let us begin this journey, the Bishop and the 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. Let us always pray for one another. Let us pray for the whole world that there might be a great sense of brotherhood.”

Let us answer Pope Francis’ request for prayers—for him, for the Church, and for the entire world. May we follow the call of Jesus to share and care for one another in love, peace, and unity.

Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen



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