

This Mystery Man Will Help Decide the Next Pope

The Catholic Church mourns the passing of Pope Francis, who died at the age of 88 on Easter Monday due to age-related ailments, including a recent battle with double pneumonia. As the church now prepares for the election of a new pope, one of its youngest voices will have a seat at the table.

As reported by Times Now World, Cardinal Mykola Bychok, a 45-year-old Ukrainian-born bishop based in Melbourne, Australia, is now among the select group of Catholic leaders who will participate in the next papal conclave.

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Bychok is the youngest cardinal in the Catholic Church and the highest-ranking Catholic official in Australia. He was elevated to the College of Cardinals by Pope Francis in December of last year.

Born in Ternopil, Ukraine, Bychok entered a monastery after finishing high school and was ordained in Lviv. His ministry has taken him across the globe, serving in Poland, the United States and now Australia.

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Since January 2020, he has led the Ukrainian Greek Catholic community in Australia as the Eparch of Saints Peter and Paul of Melbourne.

Bychok's rise is notable not just for his youth, but also for his status as the first Australian cardinal appointed since the late George Pell—and only the eighth in the nation's history. His appointment came ahead of other high-profile

leaders in the Australian Catholic Church, including Sydney Archbishop Anthony Fisher and Melbourne Archbishop Peter Comensoli.

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During the December ceremony at the Vatican, Pope Francis greeted Bychok in Ukrainian, saying, "Glory be to Jesus Christ." The gesture was warmly received by both the Australian and Ukrainian Catholic communities, who celebrated his elevation.

Bychok has also stood out as a vocal supporter of Ukraine following Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, further solidifying his role as a spiritual and cultural bridge between his homeland and the global church.

With the conclave expected to convene in the coming weeks, all eyes will be on the young cardinal as he steps into this historic role at a pivotal moment for the Catholic faith.

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