

Vatican: New Pope Will Likely Be Elected by End of March

A new pope will probably be elected by the end of March, a Vatican spokesman said on Monday, after **Pope Benedict** left his aides “incredulous” with his announcement that he would **resign** because he was too weak to fulfill the duties of his office.

Benedict said he would step down on Feb. 28 and would not take part in the **conclave** to elect a new pope, Father Federico Lombardi told reporters at the **Vatican**.

After resigning, the former pope will move to a summer residence near Rome. After that, he will live in a former monastery within Vatican territory, Lombardi said.

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