

Vatican: Pope May Change Conclave Rules Before Abdication

Pope Benedict may change Church rules governing the conclave where cardinals from around the world will meet next month to secretly elect his successor, the **Vatican** said on Wednesday.

Benedict was studying the possibility of making **changes** to laws established by his predecessor Pope John Paul before he abdicates on Feb. 28, a spokesman said.

The changes may affect the timing of the start of the **conclave**. Current Church rules call for the conclave to start around March 15 but there have been indications that it could be held earlier if the rules are changed.

Reporting By Philip Pullella and Naomi O'Leary

© 2013 Thomson Reuters. All rights reserved.