

# White Smoke Signals New Pope Elected in Secret Conclave

White smoke rose from the **Vatican's** Sistine Chapel on Wednesday signaling cardinals had elected a **new pope** to succeed Benedict and take charge of the troubled **Roman Catholic Church**.

At the same time, the bells of St. Peter's pealed.

The election, on the first full day of voting by the 115 cardinals, came more quickly than many had expected after no obvious front-runner had emerged following the surprise abdication of Benedict last month.

The identity of the new pope will be announced to the world from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica within an hour.

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*Reporting by Crispian Balmer.*

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