

Pope Francis will be a Formidable Pope - Cardinal Pell

*Catholic Communications, Sydney Archdiocese,
15 Mar 2013*



Pope Francis will be installed on Feast of St Joseph, patron of the universal Church

The Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal George Pell says Pope Francis will be a "formidable Pope."

His Eminence was speaking from Rome where he was a member of the 115-member Conclave that elected the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentinean-born Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio as the world's 226th Pontiff.

The new Holy Father and leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics is the first Jesuit to be elected Pope, the first non-European in 1200 years, the first to come from Latin America and the New World, and the first to take the name Francis after St Francis of Assisi.

The new Pope's choice of name is an important and symbolic decision the Cardinal says and points out that the Jesuit order founded by Ignatius of Loyola was a major force in the Counter Reformation and in restoring the faith across Europe back in the 16th Century.

"Pope Francis is a man of wide pastoral experience who has lived through very difficult times in Argentina during periods of military rule and financial turmoil," says Cardinal Pell and told a press conference in Rome last night he looked forward to the future with confidence.



Cardinal Pell looks forward with confidence to the future

"He's a simple man of acknowledged piety and proven orthodoxy who has shown an ability to make hard decisions and stick with them. He is a formidable man. Argentina is a tough school."

His Eminence went on to say Pope Francis would deal justly and prudently with the Vatican bureaucracy which in recent years has been mired in corruption scandals and factional struggles.

"He will support national hierarchies in the struggle against sexual abuse, giving priority to victims and one of his first tasks as Pope will be to examine the 300-page report on the workings of the Vatican by three cardinals (which was commissioned by Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI)," he says.

The election of the 76-year-old Latin American-born prelate and son of working class Italian immigrant parents took many by surprise particularly as the so-called Vatican experts omitted to include the name of Cardinal Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio in their predictions of the 12 most likely cardinals to become pope.

"I must confess in my weakness I have taken considerable pleasure in the fact that he was scarcely on any lists," His Eminence says with a smile and admits the omission of the ultimate choice for Pope by 115 of world's cardinals caused him some amusement.



Pope Francis will be a formidable

Pope predicts Cardinal

Cardinal Pell has met with the new Pope and said he had pledged him his full support.

His Eminence is expected to remain in Rome for the installation of Pope Francis which will take place on Tuesday, 19 March which fittingly for the new Holy Father is also the Feast Day of St Joseph, the father of Jesus and husband of the Virgin Mary.

This Feast Day celebrates St Joseph in these roles, and as patron of the Universal Church, fathers and social justice.

The Feast Day of St Joseph the Worker, and patron saint of workers is celebrated on 1 May.