Vatican
Vatican News
Cardinal Pietro Parolin, who served as Pope Francis' secretary of state, stands by the pope's c

Cardinal Pietro Parolin views the body of Pope Francis in a wooden coffin in the chapel of the pope's residence, Casa Santa Marta, at the Vatican April 21, 2025. Parolin, one who is seen as a potential next pope, served as Pope Francis' secretary of state. (CNS/Vatican Media)



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Rome — April 22, 2025
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Pope Francis' funeral Mass will take place on Saturday, April 26, in St. Peter's Square, the Vatican announced.

Scores of world leaders and heads of state, including U.S. President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump, are expected to attend.

The Mass, which will take place at 10 a.m. local time, will be presided over by Italian Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, the dean of the College of Cardinals.

Francis, who died on Easter Monday, April 21, will be buried in the papal basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. The 88-years-old suffered a stroke, which came after a monthslong respiratory illness that landed him in the hospital for five weeks.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, who served as Pope Francis' secretary of state, checks the seals on or

After Francis' death, Cardinal Pietro Parolin checks the seals on a door to the suite used by Pope Francis in Casa Santa Marta. (CNS/Vatican Media)

Members of the College of Cardinals gathered at the Vatican earlier this morning for their first meeting since the *Sede Vacante* period began — meaning, the See of Peter is vacant.

Among the other decisions announced this morning is that the pope's body will be carried from his Vatican residence, the Casa Santa Marta, into St. Peter's Basilica on Wednesday (April 23) at 9 a.m. local time. The next meeting of the College of Cardinals is scheduled for tomorrow afternoon, April 23, at 5 p.m. local time.

Following the pope's request, Francis will be the first pope to be interred outside the Vatican in more than a century and a fitting resting place for a man who prized his independence.

The transfer of the pope's body will take place in a procession accompanied by prayer, and then St. Peter's will be opened to the public to come and pay their final respects to the pontiff.

Pope Francis lies at rest in his coffin in the chapel of his residence, the Domus Sanctae Martha

Pope Francis lies at rest in his coffin in the chapel of his residence, Casa Santa Marta, at the Vatican as cardinals and his closest aides pray April 21, 2025. (CNS/Vatican Media)

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Saturday's Mass will mark the first funeral for a reigning pope in two decades.

The funeral for Pope John Paul II in 2005 drew about 4 million mourners to Rome. The last papal funeral — that of retired Pope Benedict XVI — took place in January 2023 and marked a rare occasion of a sitting pope, Francis, presiding over the funeral Mass of his predecessor.

The hands of Pope Francis, holding a rosary, are seen as he lies at rest in his coffin in the cha

The hands of Pope Francis, holding a rosary, are seen as he lies at rest in his coffin in the chapel of his residence, Casa Santa Marta, at the Vatican April 21, 2025.

(CNS/Vatican Media)

Francis' funeral rites will follow a more simplified version of the Vatican's traditional liturgy for the death of the pope, following the late pontiff's wishes.

Archbishop Diego Ravelli, master of papal liturgical ceremonies, said in an interview with Vatican News that Francis asked for the modifications so that the "funeral would better express the church's faith in the risen Christ."

The revised rites, Ravelli said, highlight "even more that the Roman Pontiff's funeral is that of a shepherd and disciple of Christ and not of a powerful man of this world."

This story appears in the **The Legacy of Pope Francis** feature series. View the full series.