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White smoke rises from Sistine Chapel, signaling new pope

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Conclave 2013

Vatican City — White smoke rose from a temporary chimney atop the Sistine Chapel at about 7:05 p.m. Rome time, signaling the election of a new pope and leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics.

Moments later, deep ringing from a bell in St. Peter's Basilica echoed across the crowd gathered in the neighboring square, confirming the news.

The new pope, who will be the 266th successor to St. Peter, is expected to appear on the basilica's balcony within the hour.

He will be introduced to those in the square below by French Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, assuming Tauran himself has not been elected, by the Latin version of his birth name following Tauran's proclamation of the Latin phrase "*Habemus papam*" ("We have a pope").

People had gathered in St. Peter's Square in a cold rain, sometimes a downpour, throughout the evening, keeping their eyes trained on two screens showing a video feed of the chimney and a seagull who perched there for the better part of an hour.

Shortly after 7 p.m., first the seagull and then a plume of white smoke flew up from the temporary chimney. Almost immediately, chants of "*Habemus papam*" began to roar through the crowd as people waved national flags under their umbrellas.

Images of the crowd, smiling through the rain, flashed across television screens.

Those in the square will be listening now to which first name Tauran gives. For example, should he begin introducing the new pope as "Ioannem," Latin for Sean, John, Juan or Giovanni, there are several possibilities for who the new pope is.

Should Tauran say something more unique, perhaps "Donaldum" for Donald or "Aloisium" for Luis, the selection will become apparent more quickly.

Election of the new pope comes on the fifth ballot and second day of voting among the 115 cardinals who participated in the conclave.

After the death of Pope John Paul II in 2005, the cardinals gathered in conclave to elect his successor found consensus on the fourth round of balloting, or the third ballot of the second day of voting, when they elected then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as Pope Benedict XVI.

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