

We Have Good News

AT 7 p.m. on March 13, 2013, a huge crowd that had gathered in St. Peter's Square in front of St. Peter's Basilica looked up at a small chimney and noticed that the smoke coming out was not black as it had been four times in the prior couple of days. Black smoke meant that the Cardinals meeting inside had not yet elected a new Pope. This time the smoke was white, a sign that the Holy Spirit had led the Cardinals to choose a new Pope for the Church.

A great gathering of people was already in the square, but with the white smoke, people flocked there from all over Rome. People stopped what they were doing all around the world to find out who had been elected as the new Pope.

Shortly afterward, a Cardinal came out onto the balcony and announced that there was good news: we had a Pope. He then announced his name. The new Pope was Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio from Argentina. He was the first Cardinal from the Americas ever to be elected Pope.

The Cardinal also announced that Cardinal Bergoglio had chosen the name Francis, a name never before selected by a Pope.



Called to Be a Bishop

WHEN Father Jorge finished his time as Provincial, he went to Germany to study. Afterward, he served as the head of a Jesuit seminary. He also wrote some books to help other religious live their special calling.

On May 13, 1992, he had a meeting with the Papal Nuncio (the Pope's ambassador) to Argentina. They talked about many different things, and, at the end of the conversation, the Nuncio told him that he had one more thing to tell him: he had just been named the Auxiliary Bishop of Buenos Aires.

As a Jesuit, Father Jorge knew that he was not to seek any kind of office within the Church; he was not to look for promotions. Still, he had taken a vow of obedience to the Holy Father, and this was something he could not refuse.

As soon as he became a Bishop, he decided that his ministry would be one of mercy. He took a special saying for his motto: "Seeing through the eyes of mercy, he chose him." This is what the Gospels say about Jesus' choice to call St. Matthew as an Apostle, and Bishop Jorge knew this was true for himself as well.

