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Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals

John L. Allen Jr. | Oct. 20, 2010

Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl of Washington and Chief Justice John Roberts leave the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington following the Red Mass Oct. 3. (CNS)

Pope Benedict XVI today announced the creation of 24 new cardinals, including two Americans: Archbishops Donald Wuerl of Washington, D.C., and Raymond Burke, Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, the Vatican?s supreme canonical court.

Twenty of the new cardinals are under the age of 80, and thus eligible to vote for the next pope.

A consistory, the event in which new members formally enter the College of Cardinals, is set for Nov. 20 in Rome. It will be the third consistory of Benedict?s papacy, after previous editions in March 2006 and November 2007.

All told, Benedict XVI has now appointed 50 of the roughly 120 cardinals who will elect his successor.

Another American destined eventually to become a cardinal, Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York, was not on the list because his predecessor, Edward Egan, is still under 80. A number of cardinals-to-be in other major archdioceses did not make the cut for the same reason, including the archbishops of Westminster, Rio de Janeiro, Toledo, Utrecht, and Brussels.

One surprise omission was Archbishop Thomas Collins of Toronto, Canada, who was widely expected to be on the list. At 63, however, there's plenty of time for Collins to be named in a future consistory.

Eight of the new voting-age cardinals are Italians, which means that the Italian share of cardinal-electors will rise from 17 percent at present to 20 percent as of Nov. 20, fully one-fifth of the electorate for the next pope.

Some analysts will read today?s nominations as another chapter in the ?re-Italianization? of the government of the church under Benedict XVI, especially since seven of the eight new Italian cardinals hold senior Vatican positions.

Half of the new cardinals named today are Vatican officials, meaning that there are now forty current or former Vatican officials among those under 80, representing one-third of the electorate for the next pope.

Just seven of the twenty new cardinal-electors come from outside Europe and the United States, so the composition of the College of Cardinals will continue to some extent to not reflect the distribution of the global Catholic population. Two-thirds of the Catholics in the world today live in the global South, but only one-third of Benedict?s new cardinals are from the southern hemisphere.

Prior to today?s nominations, 102 of 179 living cardinals were electors. Benedict XVI is determined to honor the tradition, set by Pope Paul VI, of capping the number of cardinal-electors at 120.

Four of today?s new cardinals are considered ?honorary? appointments, meaning cardinals already over the age of 80 and hence given the red hat largely to honor their service to the church.

Archbishop Medardo Joseph Mazombwe from Zambia is almost an "honorary" appointment himself, since he is already retired as the Archbishop of Lusaka will turn 80 next September.

The new cardinals are, in the order Benedict announced their names:

1. Angelo Amato (Italy), Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints
2. Antonios Naguib (Egypt), Patriarch of the Coptic Church of Alexandria
3. Robert Sarah (Guinea), President of Cor Unum
4. Francesco Monterisi (Italy), Archpriest of the Basilica of St. Paul
5. Fortunato Baldelli (Italy), head of the Apostolic Penitentiary
6. Raymond Burke (United States), Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura
7. Kurt Koch (Switzerland), President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
8. Paolo Sardi (Italy), Pro-Patron of the Order of Malta
9. Mauro Piacenza (Italy), Prefect of the Congregation for Clergy
10. Velasio De Paolis (Italy), President of the Prefecture of Economic Affairs for the Holy See
11. Gianfranco Ravasi (Italy), President of the Pontifical Council for Culture
12. Medardo Joseph Mazombwe (Zambia), retired Archbishop of Lusaka
13. Raul Eduardo Vela Chiriboga (Ecuador), Archbishop of Quito
14. Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya (Democratic Republic of Congo), Archbishop of Kinshasa
15. Paolo Romeo (Italy), Archbishop of Palermo
16. Donald Wuerl (United States), Archbishop of Washington
17. Raymundo Damasceno Assis (Brazil), Archbishop of Aparecida
18. Kazimierz Nycz (Poland), Archbishop of Warsaw
19. Albert Malcolm Ranjith (Sri Lanka), Archbishop of Colombo
20. Reinhard Marx (Germany), Archbishop of Munich

The four over-eighty ?honorary? cardinals are:

1. Elio Sgreccia (Italy), former president of the Pontifical Academy for Life
2. Jose' Manuel Estepa Llaurens (Spain), of the Military Ordinariate
3. Walter Brandmüller (Germany), former head of the Pontifical Committee for Historical Science
4. Domenico Bartolucci (Italy), former Maestro of the Sistine Chapel

More about the new cardinals:

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