

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

February 25, 2013 at 6:07am

Pope gives cardinals power to change conclave date

by John L. Allen Jr. by Joshua J. McElwee

NCR Today

Conclave 2013

Rome — Pope Benedict XVI has given the college of cardinals authority to change the date of the upcoming conclave to elect his successor, the Vatican announced Monday.

The pope has signed a *motu proprio* on the issue, setting aside parts of a previous mandate from Pope John Paul II governing the working of a conclave, said Jesuit Fr. Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesperson, at a press conference.

With a potential date for the conclave now in the cardinals' hands, it is unknown when they will choose to meet to elect Benedict's successor.

Lombardi said the earliest a date for the conclave might be known is March 1, when the cardinals will first meet following Benedict's resignation.

Lombardi also confirmed that the pope met Monday with the three cardinals tasked with giving him a report on the Vatican's investigation of its document leaks last year.

"The Holy Father has decided that the acts of this investigation, known only to himself, remain solely at the disposition of the new pope," said Lombardi.

The three cardinals, however, will be free to share information about the investigation with the full college of cardinals, Lombardi said.

According to John Paul II's 1996 constitution *Universi Dominici gregis*, the earliest the cardinals could have met to elect Benedict's successor was March 15. Some have raised the question of whether, given

the difference in this case that the sitting pope has decided to resign, the cardinals could elect Benedict's successor more quickly.

At the press conference, Vatican officials said the pope had not ordered the cardinals to change the date, but merely given them the power to do so.

Advertisement

In This Series

Why Francis may like having Benedict around

Mar 23, 2013

Italian film about papal election worth a watch

Mar 20, 2013

And the pope elected by the conclave of the People of God is...

Mar 14, 2013

Black smoke after first votes Wednesday

Mar 13, 2013

White smoke rises from Sistine Chapel, signaling new pope

Mar 13, 2013

[View all ?](#)

Source URL (retrieved on 05/23/2018 - 3:39pm): <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/pope-gives-cardinals-power-change-conclave-date>

Links:

[1] <https://www.ncronline.org/forward/join?clickSource=end-article>

[2] <https://www.ncronline.org/node/160616>