

Brazil Gets New Cardinal. He Will Be Choosing Next Pope

Contributed by Newsroom
Thursday, 18 October 2007

São Paulo's (Brazil) Archbishop Odilo Pedro Scherer was named cardinal on Wednesday, October 17, by Pope Benedict XVI. Since he is only 57, the new Brazilian cardinal will be able to take part in the secret conclave that will choose the next pope. Cardinals over 80, however, are not allowed to vote.

Scherer and 22 other church men should get the cardinal's red cap and gold ring during the November 24 consistory. Consistory is an assembly of cardinals presided over by the pope. It's common that papal acts and canonization of saints occur during these high level meetings.

Cardinal Scherer was born in September 21, 1949 in Cerro Largo, in the southeastern state of Rio Grande do Sul. He kept close to Curia Romana after graduating from Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University.

Before becoming São Paulo's archbishop, while he was CNBB's (Brazilian Bishops General Conference) general secretary the prelate tried to align the sometimes progressive entity to the conservative Vatican posture.

Scherer received the news of his nomination with a "I'm very happy. I'm happy for São Paulo. I rejoice with the diocese for this distinction."

The new cardinal believes that people will be asking for his help even more from now on: "Certainly now there will be more requests to intermediate situations," he said

Pope Benedict XVI has named 23 new Roman Catholic cardinals, 18 of whom are under the age of 80, making them eligible to elect his successor. The pope made the announcement to pilgrims and tourists during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square.

The new cardinals include two Americans - Archbishop John Patrick Foley, a former top Vatican official, and the archbishop of Galveston-Houston in the southern U.S. state of Texas, Daniel DiNardo.

Others include archbishops from Mumbai, India, Oswald Gracias; Dakar, Senegal, Theodore-Adrien Sarr; Nairobi, Kenya, John Njue; and the Iraqi Patriarch of the Chaldean rite, Emmanuel III Delly. The list also includes a number of Europeans.

Five of the new cardinals are over 80-years-old. Because of their age, they will not be able to enter the conclave that will choose the next pope.

The list also includes three Latin American churchmen besides Brazilian Scherer: the archbishop of Monterrey, Mexico, Francisco Robles Ortega, and two from Argentina, Vatican official Leonardo Sandri and the retired archbishop of Paraná, Estanislao Esteban Karlic.

The Europeans include two Spaniards - the archbishops of Barcelona, Lluís Martínez Sistach and Valencia, Augustin Garcia-Gasco Vicente - as well as the archbishop of Paris, André Vingt-Trois.