

Pope Benedict XVI resigns

13th February, 2013



There was a huge shock for the Catholic Church on Monday. Its leader Pope Benedict XVI resigned. No one knew he would

resign. He even surprised all of the people who worked closely with him. It is the first time a pope has resigned in nearly 600 years. The last papal resignation was in 1415. The Archbishop of Paris said resigning as Pope was a "taboo". However, he said it was a good decision because future popes would have more freedom to quit if they needed to. The Holy Father will be head of the Catholic Church until 8pm on February the 28th. From March the 1st, Vatican leaders will start looking for a new pope. Many Catholics hope their next leader will be from the developing world.

Benedict, 85, said he was too old to do his job properly. He became Pope in 2005 at the age of 77. He said that to perform the role of pope, "both strength of mind and body are necessary". He admitted that in the past few months he has not felt strong enough to do his job properly. His 89-year-old brother, Georg Ratzinger, told reporters: "My brother would like more rest at this age." Benedict had to manage some big scandals in his time as Pope. These included the truth coming out about thousands of children being sexually abused by priests. The Church covered this up for many decades. Meanwhile, world leaders have made statements to thank Benedict for his work over the past eight years.

Sources: *The Guardian* / *Irish Times*

Writing

It is crazy that an 85-year-old person is an important world leader. All powerful people should quit before they are 80. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

huge shock / resigned / taboo / good decision / freedom / Catholic / developing world / properly / strength of mind / more rest / big scandals / cover-ups / world leaders

True / False

- Pope Benedict told his secretaries that he would resign. T / F
- The last time a pope resigned was almost 600 years ago. T / F
- The pope will leave / left his role at eight in the evening on Feb. 28. T / F
- The next pope will be from the developing world for the first time. T / F
- The pope said he was too old to continue doing his job. T / F
- His bother said he wanted to stay active and do other things. T / F
- The Church kept quiet for decades about a big scandal. T / F
- Many world leaders criticised the pope for his work. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. huge | a. leader |
| 2. nearly | b. announcements |
| 3. head | c. begin |
| 4. quit | d. relaxation |
| 5. start | e. power |
| 6. perform | f. almost |
| 7. strength | g. very big |
| 8. rest | h. mistreated |
| 9. abused | i. resign |
| 10. statements | j. do |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about Pope Benedict XVI?
- What do you think of the leader of your religion?
- How important are religious leaders to you?
- Do you think it's OK for the pope to quit?
- Why do you think the pope didn't tell anyone he was going to quit?
- Should the pope have given a month's notice that he would quit?
- Why is a pope quitting such a "taboo"?
- Should the next pope be the first from the developing world?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. There was a huge shock | a. abused by priests |
| 2. the people who worked | b. was in 1415 |
| 3. The last papal resignation | c. for the Catholic Church |
| 4. start | d. and body are necessary |
| 5. the developing | e. closely with him |
| 6. he was too old to | f. past eight years |
| 7. both strength of mind | g. looking for a new pope |
| 8. the truth | h. world |
| 9. children being sexually | i. coming out |
| 10. his work over the | j. do his job properly |

Discussion – Student B

- Do you hope to be working when you're 85?
- What do you think of people who say he was wrong to resign?
- Has he damaged the Catholic Church by quitting?
- What do you think of the Catholic Church?
- Do you think 85 is too old to work?
- What do you think of the idea of a female pope?
- What questions would you like to ask Pope Benedict XVI?
- What do you think his answers would be?

Spelling

- a huge kchso
- people who worked csloley with him
- a good sdcoien
- have more mofrdee
- their next edlrae
- the noelpievgd world
- do his job eyprlorp
- ghtntser of mind
- big aadnslcs
- The Church cdvereo this up
- for many edsdeca
- nmestatste to thank Benedict

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. f	3. a	4. i	5. c
6. j	7. e	8. d	9. h	10. b

Role Play

Pope Benedict XVI - You cannot continue as pope any longer. Tell the others three reasons why. You are 85 and that's too old to work. You think no one in the world should work after they are 80 years old. You think the new pope should be in his 40s and from the developing world. Tell the others three reasons why.

Catholic Church official - You are shocked that the pope has resigned. Tell the others three reasons why. You think he should have continued until he died, like all the popes before him. You believe the next pope should be at least 60 and from Italy. Tell the others three reasons why.

Equal rights worker - You are shocked the question of age has come up. People should be able to work at any age. It is unfair that they have to retire at 60 or 65. Tell the others three reasons why. You also think it's time for a female pope or one from the developing world. Tell the others three reasons why.

Traditional Catholic - You think the pope has made a big mistake that has damaged the Catholic Church. Tell the others three reasons why. The next pope should understand he can never resign. All talk of young popes, female popes, and popes from the developing world is very bad. You disagree.

Speaking - Quitting

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| • a job | • a relationship |
| • studying English | • going to the gym |
| • eating chocolate | • saving money |
| • watching TV | • Facebook |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.