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# PREAMBLE

*“Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams.  
Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential.  
Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in,  
but with what it is still possible for you to do.”*

*“See everything, overlook a great deal, correct a little.”*  
-- Pope John XXIII

*“If someone had told me I would be pope someday,  
I would have studied harder.”*  
-- Pope John Paul I

This book, written in 2011, is meant to be a handbook for the next papal election, the one that will occur sometime in the future following the reign of the current pope, Benedict XVI. It strives to provide a systematic, data-rich guide as to the dynamics, politics, traditions and precedents of how the next pope, the Vicar of Christ, will be elected. There is even an attempt to identify and describe ten potential contenders, the so-called *papabili*. The goal of this book is to provide answers, background, context, facts, trivia and rationales to those wanting to know more about how the next pope will come to be elected than what they can readily discern from the media or the Web. Think of it as value-added information.

This book, as with all my other work on the papacy and papal history, is not meant to be controversial, provocative or sensationalistic. My aim is to elucidate and hopefully educate. This book is not meant, in any way, to be disrespectful to Benedict XVI, the current pope. I hope he has a long and productive papacy. In reality, given that it will extend the ‘shelf life’ of this book, it would be better if the election occurred later than sooner! I, therefore, hope you will appreciate that this book was not written with a time-line or an agenda as to when there will be a next pope.

The last papal transition was in April 2005. It was a gigantic, frenzied, around-the-clock, seventeen day media event closely followed by billions, most not even Catholics, across the globe. There were multiple reasons for this overwhelming interest. The larger-than-life John Paul II had been iconic, charismatic and transformational. He was much loved and near universally known, transcending geographic, cultural and religious boundaries. It was the first papal changeover in over twenty-six years, and thus, the first in the age of 24x7 cable news, the Web and blogs. However, independent of the media, many, from all walks of life, from all corners of the world, also understood, viscerally, the historic significance of what was taking place within the inescapable splendor of the Vatican. A group of Catholic prelates, many in their seventies, were electing, in secret, the best known of the world’s religious leaders. The pope, however, is not just a spiritual potentate. He is also a highly influential head-of-state; a European world leader with a worldwide following. His power-base, which grids the globe, really has no equal. In one way or another, during the bulk of the last two millennia the pope was always an inescapable presence on the world stage.

The pope’s words and actions, indubitably, have global repercussions. Consequently, there is tremendous interest as to who will be the next pope. Hundreds, if not thousands of people a day, seven days a week, from all over the globe, do Web searches along the lines of ‘who will be the next pope?’ I know because many of these searches have resulted in people visiting two of my papacy-related blogs, viz. [www.popes-and-papacy.com](http://www.popes-and-papacy.com) and [papam.wordpress.com](http://papam.wordpress.com) where I have had postings about potential *papabili*.

This book was motivated by the interest I have seen in the topic 'the next pope,' though I was aware of the adage that came to be during Pope John Paul II's twenty-six year papacy, i.e., '*the pope invariably outlives those that speculate about his successors!*' But, I am comforted somewhat by the knowledge that I am by no means the first to write a book on this topic.

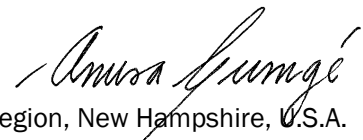
My first book on popes was '*Popes and the Tale of Their Names,*' in 2008. You cannot research and study papal names without getting involved in papal elections. Hence, as of around 2006 I had started building up a large volume of data related to conclaves. This book provided me with a means to gainfully utilize this data and expand my work on papal history. Thus, this book contains a considerable amount of in-depth historical information about papal eligibility, the role of cardinals and conclaves. I have also included analysis, commentary, statistics and minutiae. John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution pertaining to papal elections, *Universi Dominici Gregis*, is discussed in detail with oblique references to a few 'inconsistencies' contained within it. Since the 'pope names' book came out, I also often get asked, usually via e-mail, as to the possible name of the next pope. I have addressed this in a number of posts on my blogs. But, in this book, I get the chance to elaborate further and to also spell out, categorically, why I am sure, the St. Malachy prophecy notwithstanding, that the next pope is highly unlikely to be named 'Peter.'

This is a reference book. It can be read sequentially, chapter-by-chapter. But, it has also been structured such that it can be read, profitably in piece-meal, 'pick-and-choose' reference mode. In addition to the index and table of contents, readers can exploit the layout of this book with its numerous sub-headings, sidebars, tables and illustrations to quickly locate sections of immediate or specific interest. It could, particularly during the transition, even serve as a coffee table book that will provide significant background and context to the reports from Rome being shown on TV.

In the end, this book turned out to be, as did the prior two 'pope' books, a one-man effort. I was, however, fortunate that there were a number of kind souls I had 'met' over the Internet, who helped me, via e-mails, to locate information, understand nuances or rectify misunderstandings. Salvador Miranda, of Miami, Florida, who publishes the invaluable 'Cardinals' Web site, helped me, unstintingly and expeditiously, numerous times, always graciously, with words of encouragement. Thank you, dear Salvador. I also need to thank Byron Hoover of Louisiana, a certified religion teacher, Gabriel Chow who runs GCatholic.com and Father Reto Nay of CardinalRating.com. They all helped me whenever I asked. Thank you.

A number of exceptional people helped me, voluntarily, to proof this '2011' book. Key among them were: Dewie J. Gaul of Sioux City, Iowa; Darien N. Clark of the Knights of Columbus; publicity-shunning "Leopold Fitzclarence" of Boston; Father John Stabeno and Father Anthony Churchill of the UK. Their help and support was invaluable and I am extremely grateful. My wife, Deanna, also stepped in to coordinate the proofing and help me with the index. But, I need to make clear, my idiosyncratic writing style is deeply ingrained and there is only so much anyone can do to truly fix my prose. During three decades as a professional writer, I gained a hard-earned reputation for veracity. I was lucky with the 'pope names' book. But, I know that I flirt with fallibility on a daily basis. My penchant for innocent but glaring typos is legendary. Given the depth and breadth of the subject matter covered in this book it is inevitable that there will be some unintended errors and oversights. I apologize for them in advance. In the Notes section that follows, I explain how this book will be kept up to-date. My [www.popes-and-papacy.com](http://www.popes-and-papacy.com) will serve as the primary 'portal' for this book as it has done for the other pope books. You can contact me at: [anu@wownh.com](mailto:anu@wownh.com).

I hope you find the information in this book timely, germane, useful and possibly even rewarding. My hope is that this book will enable you to experience the next papal transition with an enhanced sense of awareness. My motto, as it appears on my Web site [www.guruge.com](http://www.guruge.com), is '*Think Free, Or Die.*' In the spirit of that, my intent, as ever, is to provide you with food for thought. Grace, and may peace be with you.

  
Lakes Region, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

Summer 2011

# NOTES

- Updates to this book: Given that it is meant to serve as a definitive reference guide to the next papal election, this book, at all times, needs to be up to-date, accurate and germane. Two avenues will be pursued, in parallel, to achieve this goal. A permanent 'Next Pope' page will be maintained at:

[www.popes-and-papacy.com](http://www.popes-and-papacy.com)

with an ongoing list of updates to the book along with an *errata*. In addition, the printed version of the book will be revised on a regular basis, at a minimum, yearly – this being feasible thanks to today's 'print-on-demand' (PoD) technology. If appropriate, printable pages with updated data (e.g., the composition of the College of Cardinals) in PDF form, reflecting the formatting of this book, will be made available via the 'Next Pope' Web page for those wishing to keep such within their copy of the book. If you find any errors in this book please let me know via e-mail or by leaving a comment at the 'Next Pope' Web page. My e-mail address is: [anu@wownh.com](mailto:anu@wownh.com). In the *errata* that I will maintain, I will be more than happy to include all the names (and any attributions) of those who help me maintain the veracity and integrity of this book. So in your correspondence please indicate whether you want your name mentioned.

- Number of recognized popes: For consistency with a number of online lists of popes, in particular the one found on Wikipedia, this book, as did '*Popes and the Tale of Their Names*,' recognizes 266 popes – with Benedict XVI being the 266<sup>th</sup> pope. This number is one higher than what others use as their official number. This discrepancy exists due to the four day long papacy of the *original* Stephen II. This Stephen was acknowledged as a legitimate pope by the Vatican for 400 years – up until 1961. But he was then struck from the list because he had died prior to being consecrated as the Bishop of Rome. Older references still include him. There are also those who feel that he should be included given that he was an elected and acknowledged pope per the practices of his time. The current papal count can vary between 263 to 266, depending on how one treats Stephen II and the three terms of Benedict IX. Thus the differences in the numbers used in various lists are due to:

266 = includes the original Stephen II (#92) and Benedict IX's 3 terms.

265 = without the original Stephen II, but with 3 entries for Benedict IX.

264 = with the original Stephen II, but with Benedict IX listed just once.

263 = without the original Stephen II and with Benedict IX listed but once.

The inclusion of Stephen II in this book should not cause any problems or misunderstandings since his inclusion is consistently stated throughout the book.

- Sequence numbers: Sequence numbers, denoted by '#,' are extensively used throughout this book to provide easy identification of the popes: e.g., Pius IX (#256). The papal name lists in Appendix A and B both include these sequence numbers for quick reference. They also serve as a convenient index for determining the relative orderings of the 266 popes. For example, when one sees John XIV (#137), John XV (#138) and John XVII (#141), it is easy to see that John XV immediately succeeded John XIV, while John XVII is separated from XV by two intervening popes. The start and end dates for all of the papacies are listed in Appendix B. Using sequence numbers is much less intrusive and cumbersome than identifying popes by their dates: e.g., Felix III (483-492).

- ☞ Inclusion of ‘St.’ and ‘Bl.’: As of May 1, 2011, there are seventy-eight popes that have been canonized [i.e., are Saints] and eleven who have been beatified [i.e., to be referred to as ‘Blessed’] – John Paul II (#265) the last to be beatified. The list of popes in *Appendix A* designates all eighty-eight of these popes with the relevant ‘St.’ and ‘Bl.’ veneration. However, ‘St.’ and ‘Bl.’ are not included with the names of the appropriate popes on a regular or consistent basis, within the main body of this book. This is, in the main, to preserve the historical context of the narrative. Canonizations and beatifications can only occur posthumously. Thus, referring to a pope as ‘St.’ or ‘Bl.’ when describing actions he performed during his reign can be confusing – and can sometimes even sound incongruous. The anachronistic nature of this veneration can distort the contemporaneous standing of a pope during his lifetime. For example, Celestine V was not a ‘saint’ when he abdicated in December 1294 and was then imprisoned. His canonization occurred eighteen years later at the behest of the King of France, who wanted it not to venerate Celestine, but so as to discredit Celestine’s successor, Boniface VIII.
- ☞ The context of the term ‘name’: In most instances the terms ‘name’ and ‘papal name,’ as used in this book, refer to an elemental [i.e., basic or unqualified] name: e.g., ‘John,’ ‘Sixtus,’ ‘Pius,’ etc. Unless otherwise specified or abundantly clear from its context, these terms, when applied to the 36 repeated papal names, do not refer to the qualified name [i.e., name plus ordinal] of a specific pope. So ‘name’ in general would mean ‘John,’ ‘Sixtus,’ ‘Pius,’ etc., rather than John XXIII, Sixtus II or Pius VI.
- ☞ Navigating this book: This book can be read conventionally, chapter by chapter from start to finish. But it does not have to be. Each chapter, and in essence, each section is self-contained and can be read, comprehended and savored independently. Thus, it is indeed possible to use this book in ‘lucky dip’ mode. If read in this manner, the numerous lists and tables found throughout the book could serve as guideposts. There is also a select index that should help those who want to pursue a particular reference or theme.
- ☞ Geographical references: Abbreviations such as ‘N,’ ‘SE,’ etc. occurring in the context of geographic references, e.g., ‘N Rome,’ refer to compass directions. ‘N’ – north, ‘E’- east, ‘SE’ – southeast, etc.

Roughly to scale schematic of the set up within the Sistine Chapel for the 2005 conclave.

