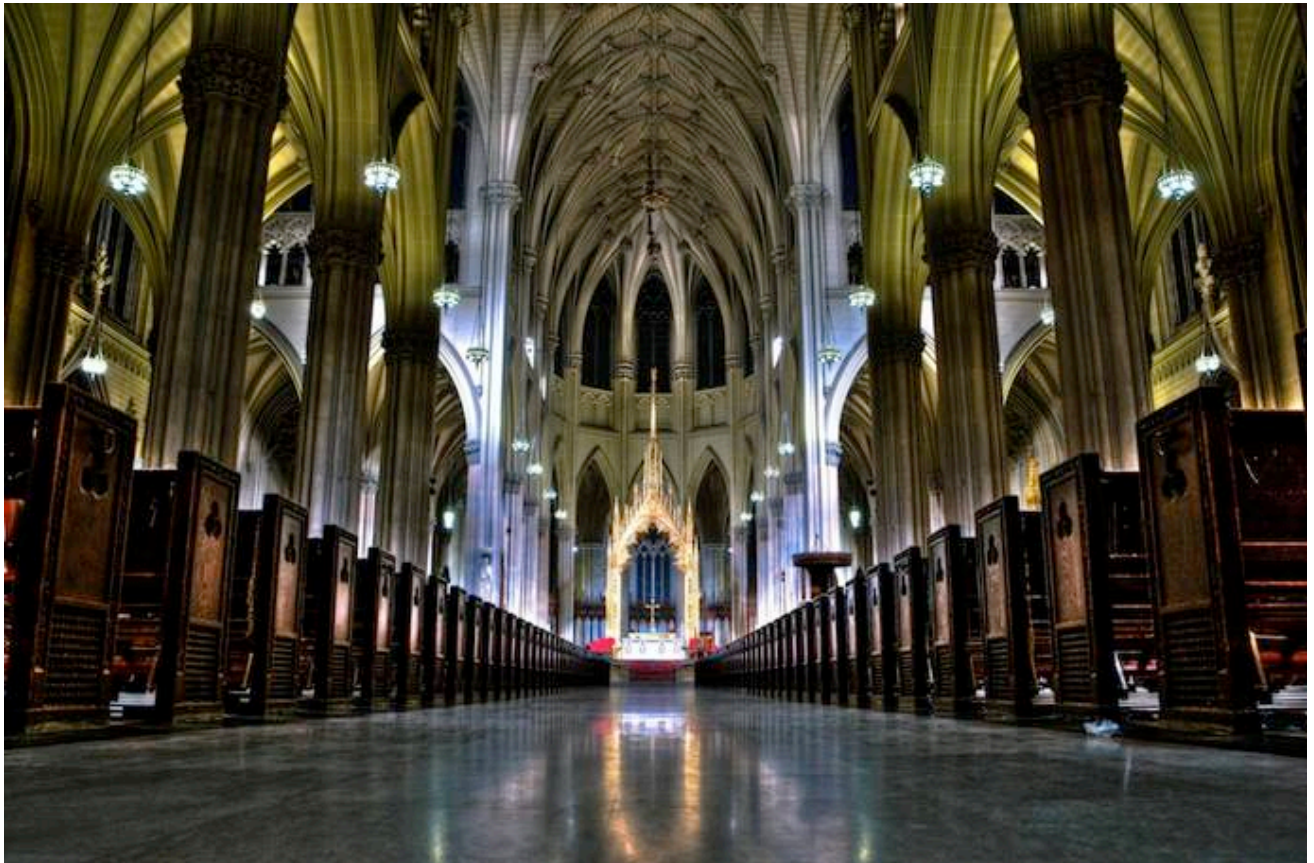


Thinking of the Next Pope: the Red Biretta Goes to Timothy M. Dolan

N. L. (February 20, 2012)



New York's Archbishop was one of 22 Catholic churchmen who became Cardinals in a ceremony held in Rome by Pope Benedict XVI. Traditionally Americans are ruled out as papal contenders, with the argument that the world doesn't need a superpower pope. There actually is another American as well, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien.

Pope Benedict XVI created 22 new cardinals on Saturday February 18, including Timothy M. Dolan of New York, in a ceremony at St. Peter's Basilica. Among the 22 we find the archbishops of Prague, Toronto, Florence, Utrecht and Hong Kong as well as the heads of several Vatican offices. Seven of the 22 are Italian thus boosting Italy's chances of taking back the papacy for one of its own following years under a Polish and a German pope. Cardinal Dolan emerged as something of the star of the consistory, delivering a highly praised speech on spreading the faith and mentioned in some Italian media as a possible successor to Pope Benedict.



Cardinal Timothy Michael Dolan, born February 6, 1950, is the tenth and current [Archbishop of New York](#) [2]. Dolan also currently serves as the President of the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) [3] and was granted the titular position as Archpriest of Our Lady of Guadalupe of Mount Mario in Rome.

Dolan is widely known for his conservative values (In an interview with the [New York Post](#) [4] on April 22, 2009, Dolan reasserted the Catholic Church's opposition to legalizing same-sex marriage. Dolan said, "There is an in-built code of right and wrong that is imbedded in the human DNA...Hard-wired into us is a dictionary, and the dictionary defines marriage as between one man, one woman for life, please God, leading to the procreation of human life. And if we begin to tamper with the very definition of marriage, then we're going to be in big trouble") and charismatic media personality (as a professor at the [Roman Catholic Marquette University](#) [5] said, he "is with Rome on the big issues and on the little ones, but he does not do it in a dictatorial fashion.") He previously served as [Archbishop of Milwaukee](#) [6] from 2002-2009, preceded by service as an [Auxiliary Bishop of St. Louis](#) [7] from 2001-2002.

"Benedict received the cardinals-designate from his throne under a soaring dome designed by Michelangelo, as one by one they knelt before the 84-year-old pope and received the red silk square-ridged hats, called birettas, that signify princes of the church. With Saturday's ceremony, there are now 125 cardinals under the age of 80, and thus eligible to vote for the next pope. More than half of the cardinal-electors are now Italians and other Europeans, strengthening the Western voice at the church's highest levels even as the rank and file grows most rapidly in the global south," Sharon Otterman of the [New York Times](#) [8] wrote.

The day prior his elevation Dolan addressed the pope and the College of Cardinals on spreading the faith in a secularized world. NY1 reports that Dolan's speech struck a grave note, describing how, along with love and joy, blood also spreads the Catholic faith. Archdiocesan officials tell the local news station he was referring to recent attacks on Christians around the world. Apologizing for his rusty Italian, Dolan dusted his remarks with his trademark good humor, referring to cardinals as "scarlet audio-visual aids for all of our brothers and sisters also called to be ready to suffer and die for Jesus."

"Like other cardinals, Dolan will soon wear red, a symbol of their willingness to defend the church with their blood," Vivian Lee reports. "The new cardinals are entrusted with the service of love: love for God, love for his church, an absolute and unconditional love for his brothers and sisters even unto shedding their blood, if necessary," Pope Benedict said.

"Dolan's red robes, by the way, are ready, courtesy of Gammarelli Tailoring," Lee continues, "The Gammarellis have clothed at least five popes and try to stay discrete about it." (A cardinal wears full-length red cassock, the mozzetta or half-cape, the rochet or white lacy piece, the zucchetto or skullcap, and finally the biretta or pointed hat.)

[ABC](#) [9] news reports that Dolan has joked "that the Vatican's tailors may have to let out his new red cassock after all the pasta he's been eating. He also jokes that he's reluctant to wear the red socks that complete his new wardrobe, lest he be considered a [Red Sox](#) [10] fan."

Thenorthwestern.com writes that Dolan has been "mentioned in some Italian media as an improbable papabile, or having the qualities of a future pope. Traditionally Americans are ruled out as papal contenders, with the argument that the world doesn't need a superpower pope. But Dolan's joyful demeanor seemed to have struck a chord in a Vatican that has been anything but joyful over a rash of news reports about political infighting and financial mismanagement."

Although most of the news reports are on Dolan's appointment, there is also another American who got a red hat Saturday, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, the outgoing archbishop of Baltimore, who also has strong ties to New York City. "Decades before he donned the red cap of Rome, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien wore a Yankees hat," Daniel Beekman of the New York Daily News reports. The head of the [Archdiocese of Baltimore](#) [11] is indeed a Bronx native who "never expected to make the leap to the



second-biggest job in Roman Catholicism.”

He is the current Grand Master of the Equestrian [Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem](#) [12], an order of knighthood under the protection of the pope.

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