

The Forward Eagle

News, Reviews & Elisions
Of Mutual Interest
Compiled Weekly by Tim Forward
for
The Riverdale Senior Services Center
Bronx, NY

Current events

Briefly Noted

Cardinals not elected Pope

The Washington Post
May 7, 2025

Anders Arborelius (Stockholm)

Arborelius, 75, is the bishop of Stockholm and the first ethnic Swede to serve as Catholic bishop of Sweden since the Reformation. He has an unusual background for a cardinal. He was born a Lutheran, in Sorengo, Switzerland, and converted to Catholicism when he was 20. He has suggested the creation of a special advisory body of women, similar to the College of Cardinals. He advocates an openness to refugees. Arborelius has said he would be surprised if the next pope were from Europe. With the demographics of the Catholic Church “becoming less European . . . the more natural thing was to think of someone from Africa or Asia.”

Charles Maung Bo (Yangon, Myanmar)

Bo, 76, is the archbishop of Yangon in Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist country. He has been outspoken against the violence inflicted by the country’s military junta, which has reportedly targeted Catholic villages and churches, according to local and religious media outlets. He was born in the small village of Monhla. He served in parishes across central and northeastern Myanmar and was appointed archbishop of Yangon in 2003. He also served as president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Myanmar from 2000 to 2006.

François-Xavier Bustillo (Ajaccio, France)

Bustillo, 56, is the bishop of Ajaccio, the capital city of the French island of Corsica, a staunchly Catholic region. He is among the youngest members of the College of Cardinals, but he is generating a buzz — especially after having secured the first papal visit to Corsica in December. He has put himself forward as someone who can bridge divisions within the church, saying, “Differences are beautiful and should not lead to division.” Bustillo has a multinational profile. He was born in Pamplona, Spain, and studied theology in Italy and France.

Fridolin Ambongo Besungu (Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo)

Ambongo, 65, is the archbishop of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo and president of Africa’s Association of Catholic Bishops. He represents Africa’s rapidly expanding Catholic community. He is also among the cardinals who oppose blessing same-sex couples, despite Francis’ endorsement. His vocal stance helped galvanize support for his papal candidacy among fellow conservatives but could make it challenging to win over the large bloc of more moderate cardinals in the next conclave. Born in Boto, near Congo’s northern border, Ambongo was ordained when he was 28. He taught moral theology at the Catholic University of Congo in Kinshasa. According to his Vatican biography, he helped respond to the spread of Ebola in Congo as well as political crises.

Jean-Marc Aveline (Marseille, France)

Aveline, 66, is the metropolitan archbishop of Marseille, a Mediterranean port



Cardinals meeting in the Sistine Chapel - May, 2025

city shaped by generations of immigrants and refugees. He would be “a pope from the same cloth as Pope Francis,” Martens said. He reportedly met regularly with Francis, and he convinced the pope to come to Marseille for a discussion about migration and other issues related to the Mediterranean. He disagreed with Francis, however, on the need to restrict the Latin Mass, and he was among the French clergy who urged caution after the pope okayed blessings for same-sex couples.

Aveline was born in Oran, Algeria, when it was under French colonial rule, but his family was among those forced out when Algeria gained independence. He studied in France in Marseille, Avignon and Paris.

Luis Antonio Gokim Tagle (Manila)

Tagle, 67, is the pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization for the Philippines, an overwhelmingly Catholic nation. He is considered closely aligned with Francis. He has criticized the “harsh” and “severe” rhetoric Catholic clerics use to describe members of the LGBTQ+ community, divorced people and unwed mothers. Tagle was born in Manila; his mother is of Chinese heritage and his father is Tagalog. In 1991, nearly a decade after he was ordained in Manila, he graduated from the Catholic University of America with a doctorate in theology.

Mario Grech (Vatican City)

Grech, 68, is the secretary general of the Synod of Bishops, a top advisory body to the pope. He was formerly the bishop of Gozo in Malta. Grech was born in Qala, Malta, and studied philosophy and theology in the seminary of Gozo. He was ordained as a priest in 1984 and appointed in 2005 by Benedict as Bishop of Gozo.

Grech has embraced progressive stances on issues like the ordination of women, which he called a “natural deepening of the Lord’s will.” He oversaw a landmark gathering of the Synod of Bishops that concluded in October without declaring major changes on women and LGBTQ+ Catholics.

Matteo Maria Zuppi (Bologna, Italy)

Zuppi, 69, is the archbishop of Bologna. He was appointed by Francis to lead peace missions in Russia and Ukraine and has worked with the Sant’Egidio community, a group of lay Catholics dedicated to social services. Born in Rome, Zuppi is the grandnephew of Carlo Confalonieri, a cardinal who was a top aide to Pope Pius XI in the early

20th century. After studying philosophy and theology, Zuppi was ordained in 1981 and spent many years in parishes across Rome. In the early 1990s, he helped facilitate peace negotiations in Mozambique during the country’s civil war, according to his Sant’Egidio biography.

Peter Erdo (Budapest)

Erdo, 72, is the metropolitan archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest in Hungary and is among the College of Cardinals’ more conservative members. When Pope Francis declared in December 2023 that Catholic priests could bless (but not marry) same-sex couples, Erdo appeared to oppose the decision in his Christmas Eve sermon, without naming the decree directly. He has also opposed allowing divorced and remarried Catholics to receive

Communion. During Europe’s migrant crisis in 2015, Erdo said the church should not take in people because it would constitute human trafficking, Reuters reported.

Erdo was born in Budapest in 1952 and ordained just before his 23rd birthday. He served in a small-town parish close to Hungary’s border with Slovakia and later obtained doctorates in theology and canon law.

Pierbattista Pizzaballa (Jerusalem)

Pizzaballa, 60, is the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, the ranking archbishop of the Catholic Church in Israel, the Palestinian territories, Jordan and Cyprus. He has acted as a diplomat for peace and demonstrated dedication to his flock. After Hamas’s attack on Israel in October 2023, he said he would be willing to offer himself in an exchange for the return of kidnapped Israeli children. Last year, he made a pre-Christmas visit to the sole Catholic parish in Gaza.

Pizzaballa was born in Cologno al Serio, a village in northern Italy, and ordained a priest in 1990. Francis made him the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem in 2020 and Pizzaballa was proclaimed a cardinal in 2023.

Pietro Parolin (Vatican City)

As the Vatican’s secretary of state, Parolin, 70, has been the pope’s top diplomatic envoy since 2013 and is among the highest-ranking cardinals in seniority. He spent years in the Holy See’s diplomatic service, in Nigeria, Mexico and Venezuela. Vatican experts describe Parolin as a cautious, prudent and moderate leader who is well-known across the College of Cardinals. Parolin was born in a small province in northern Italy.

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This paper is offered as a review of recent topics taken up by the current events discussion group at Riverdale Senior Services Center.

Please join us at the Center for Ageless Living, 2600 Netherland Avenue, Bronx, NY each Monday at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon for Current Events with Tim.

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