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The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 15/02/13

The Pope resigns!

Recently the world was shocked with the news that Pope Benedict XVI had resigned. The news that the Head of the Catholic Church was to step down at the end of February shocked world political leaders, as well as religious figures.

The Pope said he is too old to continue, citing ill health. He is 85, has arthritis and has been wearing a pacemaker for many years. It is the first time in nearly 600 years that a Pope has resigned. Most normally die of old age while in office.

The Pope's decision may lead to a much younger Pope being elected. The question is - will it be an Italian or other European or someone from Africa, the America's or indeed Asia? Whoever it is, The Vatican expects a new Pope to be elected before Easter.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger became Pope in 2005 following the death of Pope John Paul II. He took the helm aged 78, making him one of the oldest Popes elected. His resignation is the first since 1415, when Pope Gregory XII handed in his notice amid a schism within the church.

The Pope's closest aides said the move showed "great courage" and "determination". The new Pope will be elected by members of a 117-strong nominating conclave in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican.

The Pope's decision to quit highlights the fact that the Vatican should consider a much younger man for the job. If you think about it most people retire around the age of 65. The current Pope was elected at 78! Whoever is elected takes on the modern world, with all the pressures it brings. A much younger Pope makes sense, surely?

SPEAKING

Think of three things you know about the Pope retiring. Go round the room swapping details with others.

LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

1) The article – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

2) The article - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

3) Article quiz - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A questions

- 1) Who has resigned?
- 2) What is the Pope's original name?
- 3) What country does the Pope come from?
- 4) How old is the Pope?
- 5) Where does the Pope live?

Student B questions

- 1) How many cardinals will elect a new Pope?
- 2) Where will the new Pope be elected?
- 3) Name the previous Pope.
- 4) Name the previous Pope who resigned.
- 5) What year did the Pope, who previously resigned, step down? Why?

Category: Religion / The Vatican / The Pope Resigning
Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

The Pope resigns! – 15th February 2013

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **'The Pope'**. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

WRITING / SPEAKING

The Pope retires! - *In pairs* choose three things from the article about it.

Write them below.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Add three similar ideas of your own about the subject. Discuss together.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

WRITING / SPEAKING

Think of three recent news stories about the Catholic Church. Write down three headlines about these stories. Then discuss them in class.

The teacher will choose some students to discuss out thoughts.

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Will the new Pope use Twitter?
- 3) Which continent should the new Pope come from?
- 4) Who do you think should be Pope?
- 5) Were you shocked by the Pope's announcement?
- 6) Are the pressures of being Pope harder today than in the past?
- 7) What advice would you give the new Pope?
- 8) Where will the Pope who has resigned live in retirement?
- 9) Would you like to be Pope?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in *CNN Vatican TV* studio. Today's interview is about: *The Pope retiring.*

- 1) A Vatican official.
- 2) The Pope who is retiring!
- 3) A Cardinal who will help elect the next Pope.
- 4) A world leader.

The teacher will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In pairs. You are in a coffee shop near the Vatican. Start a conversation about: *'The Pope retiring'*. 5 mins.

SPEAKING - GAME

Form a circle – 'I went to church and a saw a ...' Go round the circle, repeat the previous words, adding a new word. Forget a word and you are eliminated. 10 mins. .

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

Discuss the following...

The Pope retiring

The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Why has the Pope resigned?
- 3) Does it show "great courage" to resign like the Pope has?
- 4) Have the scandals in the Catholic Church affected the Pope's decision?
- 5) People are asking 'why should the Pope resign now?' Why?
- 6) Does the world economic crisis affect the work the Pope does?
- 7) Does the next Pope need to be younger?
- 8) Why did the Pope make his resignation in Latin?
- 9) Has this been a difficult lesson in English for you to understand?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

GAP FILL: READING

The Pope resigns!

Recently the world was shocked with the news that Pope Benedict XVI had resigned. The news that the Head of the Catholic Church was to step down at the end of (1)___ shocked world political leaders, as well as (2)___ figures.

The Pope said he is too old to continue, citing ill health. He is 85, has arthritis and has been wearing a (3)___ for many years. It is the first time in nearly 600 years that a Pope has resigned. Most (4)___ die of old age while in office.

The Pope's (5)___ may lead to a much younger Pope being elected. The question is - will it be an Italian or other European or someone from Africa, the America's or (6)___ Asia? Whoever it is, The (7)___ expects a new (8)___ to be elected before Easter.

normally / Pope / February / indeed / pacemaker / Vatican / religious / decision

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger became Pope in 2005 following the death of Pope John Paul II. He took the (1)___ aged 78, making him one of the oldest Popes elected. His resignation is the first since 1415, when Pope Gregory XII handed in his notice amid a (2)___ within the church.

The Pope's closest (3)___ said the move showed "great (4)___" and "(5)___". The new Pope will be elected by members of a 117-strong nominating (6)___ in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican.

The Pope's decision to quit (7)___ the fact that the Vatican should consider a much younger man for the job. If you think about it most people (8)___ around the age of 65. The current Pope was elected at 78! Whoever is elected takes on the modern world, with all the pressures it brings. A much younger Pope makes sense, surely?

retire / highlights / aides / helm / courage / conclave / schism / determination

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

The Pope resigns!

Recently the world was shocked (1)___ the news that Pope Benedict XVI had resigned. The news that the Head of the Catholic Church was to step down at the end of February shocked world political leaders, as well as religious figures.

The Pope said he is (2)___ old to continue, citing ill health. He is 85, has arthritis and has been wearing a pacemaker (3)___ (4)___ years. It is the first time in nearly 600 years (5)___ a Pope has resigned. Most normally die of old age while in office.

The Pope's decision (6)___ lead to a (7)___ younger Pope being elected. The question is - will it be an Italian or other European or someone (8)___ Africa, the America's or indeed Asia? Whoever it is, The Vatican expects a new Pope to be elected before Easter.

that / many / with / much / from / may / for / too

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger became Pope (1)___ 2005 following the death of Pope John Paul II. (2)___ took the helm aged 78, making (3)___ one of the oldest Popes elected. His resignation is the first since 1415, when Pope Gregory XII handed in his notice amid a schism within the church.

The Pope's closest aides said the move showed "great courage" and "determination". The new Pope will be elected (4)___ members of a 117-strong nominating conclave in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican.

The Pope's decision to quit highlights the fact that the Vatican should consider a much younger man for the job. (5)___ (6)___ think about (7)___ most people retire around the age of 65. The current Pope was elected at 78! Whoever is elected takes (8)___ the modern world, with all the pressures it brings. A much younger Pope makes sense, surely?

it / if / by / in / him / you / he / on

GAP FILL: LISTENING

The Pope resigns!

Recently the world was shocked with the news that _____ had resigned. The news that the _____ was to step down at the end of February shocked world political leaders, as well as religious figures.

The Pope said he is too old to continue, citing ill health. He is 85, has arthritis and has been wearing a pacemaker for many years. It is the first time in nearly 600 years that a Pope has resigned. Most _____ while in office.

The Pope's decision may lead to a much younger Pope being elected. The question is - will it be an Italian or other European or _____, the America's or indeed Asia? Whoever it is, The Vatican expects a new Pope to be elected before Easter.

_____ became Pope in 2005 following the death of Pope John Paul II. He took the helm aged 78, making him one of the oldest Popes elected. His resignation is the first since 1415, when _____ handed his notice in amid a schism within the church.

The Pope's closest aides said the move showed "great courage" and "determination". The new Pope will be elected by members of a 117-strong nominating conclave in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican.

The Pope's decision to quit _____ that the Vatican should consider a much younger man for the job. _____ most people retire around the age of 65. The current Pope was elected at 78! Whoever is elected takes on the modern world, with all the pressures it brings. A much younger Pope _____, _____?

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WRITING/SPELLING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - In pairs, think of as many words you know associated with **The Vatican**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

2) Sentence starters - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) The Vatican _____
- 2) World leaders _____
- 3) The Pope _____

3) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **A new Pope**. Your email can be read out in class.

GAP FILL READING

- 1) February
- 2) religious
- 3) pacemaker
- 4) normally
- 5) decision
- 6) indeed
- 7) Vatican
- 8) Pope

ANSWERS

- 1) Helm
- 2) schism
- 3) aides
- 4) courage
- 5) determination
- 6) conclave
- 7) highlights
- 8) retire

SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) Catholic
- 2) pacemaker
- 3) Pope
- 4) Normally
- 5) Benedict
- 6) religious
- 7) decision
- 8) much
- 9) indeed
- 10) schism

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

Pass = 12

Good = 15

Very good = 18

Excellent = 20

- 11) Chapel
- 12) quit
- 13) determination
- 14) courage
- 15) aides
- 16) conclave
- 17) Vatican
- 18) highlights
- 19) should
- 20) surely

The Pope resigns! – *15th February 2013*