

Obama praises Pope Benedict XVI, wishes cardinals well



By Olivier Knox, Yahoo! News | The Ticket - 1 hr 40 mins ago

President Barack Obama praised Pope Benedict XVI on Monday after the pontiff shocked the world by announcing he would resign late this month, citing poor health. Obama also sent his best to cardinals due to gather to pick a new leader of the Catholic Church.

“On behalf of Americans everywhere, Michelle and I wish to extend our appreciation and prayers to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI,” Obama said in a written statement.

“Michelle and I warmly remember our meeting with the Holy Father in 2009, and I have appreciated our work together over these last four years,” he continued. “The Church plays a critical role in the United States and the world, and I wish the best to those who will soon gather to choose His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI’s successor.”

Other leading politicians weighed in as well. Republican House Speaker John Boehner, who is Catholic, said “the prayers and gratitude of American Catholics” were with the pope and praised “his quiet, steady, leadership of the church in uncertain times.”

Republican Sen. Marco Rubio—recently in a religion-themed [dustup with Time Magazine](#)—said Benedict had “displayed the qualities of an excellent leader and a true man of God by putting the interests of the Vatican and the Catholic Church over his own papacy.”

Rubio added: “I wish him well in the future and, as a Catholic, I thank him for his service to God and the church. I also look with optimism toward the future of the Catholic Church as it prepares to welcome a new leader and as it continues to spread God’s message of faith, hope and love to all the corners of the world.”



Pope Benedict XVI waves as he rides on the Popemobile through Saint Peter’s Square in ...