

Pontiff, TP O'MAHONY assesses candidates

next Pope



LEFT: Cardinal Francis Arinze is 8-1 to be next Pope, while above, Italian Cardinal Dionigi Tettamanzi is 7-1 and the choice of TP O'Mahony.

German Ratzinger is the favourite

ODDS on the next Pope by Paddy Power:

Joseph Ratzinger, Germany, 3/1.

Jean-Marie Lustiger, France, 9-2.

Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini (Italy), 5-1.

Dionigi Tettamanzi, Italy, 7-1.

Francis Arinze, Nigeria, 8-1.

Claudio Hummes, Brazil, 8/1.

Angelo Sodano, Italy, 10-1.

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Argentina, 12-1.

Jose Da Cruz Policarpo, Portugal, 12-1

Cardinal Francisco Javier Errazuriz Ossa, Chile, 14-1

Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga, Honduras, 16-1.

Keith O'Brien, Scotland, 20-1.

Cardinal Ruini, Italy, 20-1

Count Christoph von Schoenborn, Austria, 25-1

Ivan Dias, India, 33-1. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Italy, 33-1.

Also

Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, UK, 40-1.

Diarmuid Martin, Ireland, 100/1.

Desmond Connell, Ireland, 100-1.

Next Pope's name Benedict 3/1, John Paul, 7/2, John, 5/1, Pius, 6/1, Andrew, 10/1, Paul, 12/1, James, 14/1, Matthew, 16/1, Leo 16/1, Luke, 16/1, Also Blessed Innocent/Innocent, 40/1, Blessed Urban/Urban, 40/1, and Valentine is odds of 50/1.

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on Monday 

CORK, Capital of Culture. Pah!

When news came my way that the World Toilet Summit would be coming to these shores, I had naively assumed that our city, with the year that's in it, would be the number one location on the organisers' minds.

No, the Waterfront Hall in Belfast is where these international meetings will take place in September.

So it seems to be up to me alone to bring important lavatory discourse to the attention of Cork.

The World Toilet Organisation, a group dedicated to improving the world's public toilets, are the organisers of the summit, and last week they launched their search for the Loo of the Year.

The annual competition is promoted by the British Toilet Association for the first time this year, and Irish toilets will make their debut on the roll call.

"We're expecting more than 1,000 entries this year," said awards director Richard Chisnell from the British Toilet Organisation.

"There are 50 different entry categories, including important locations like cemeteries and crematoria. Every 'away from home' location is covered."

The first World Toilet Summit was held in 2001 in Singapore and each one since has been held in Asia, which is somewhat appropriate. To my mind, Asia doesn't do toilets very well.

Most cubicles in public toilets in Asia do not contain a prototype conforming to the flush toilet designed by Thomas J Crapper, like Westerners are used to, but have a gap in the ground with a porcelain bottom that you are expected to squat over and assume the position of a downhill Olympic skier.

The Japanese do have the electronic sit-down toilet — the seat rest has an installed heater and hydraulic jets spray water to clean you. I happened to use one on what I must say was not a specifically toilet-related trip to the Land of the Rising Seat Temperature and a disadvantage I found was that when a person does not know how to use it properly/at all, he/she can end up very wet. The jet of water can be upsetting for first-time users and some people may end up washing their faces if they turn around to face the toilet bowl in an attempt to somehow stop the water jet that has just been violating their nether regions.

When it comes to rating the public loo, one must remember it is vastly different to the one in the bathroom we have at home.

A bathroom in a home will usually have a feminine touch that us men are very grateful for: good lighting, a waft of pot pourri, perhaps a picture on the wall that shows the spume of a wave as it lashes against a lighthouse. These are ideal conditions to visit a toilet under. A word on the pot pourri though: most man-stool laughs in the face of this stuff. Nearly all men (main diet: beer, carbohydrates), after a visit to the toilet, have to get one of those air-freshener canisters and hold it high above their head with arm outstretched and do several laps of the bathroom before it is safe for immediate (five minutes) occupation by another.

A male public toilet in Cork is not a nice place to visit. They are dirty, smelly and dark places. If the toilet seats are not cold, they are wet. Cubicles have soaking floors, empty loo paper tubes and the lock is always broken.

Saying all that, although I have never been inside a ladies' public toilet during daytime hours, my impression is that women actually have it much tougher than men when caught short.

Because although this may be the year of culture in Cork, the biggest queue I have seen so far has not been for Andrea Bocelli tickets, nor Munster rugby, but outside the ladies in Roches Stores.

All of which may make you think that I don't have a nomination for the loo of the year.

You'd be wrong. There is one public toilet in this city that is an oasis for those seeking a comfortable, quiet and satisfying place to sit. If I printed where it was here, however, it no longer would be.

Entries for Loo of the Year: 24-hour hotline: +44(0)1962-850277 or via e-mail: nominations@loo.co.uk.

Closing date for entries this year is June 30. The awards presentation will take place during the 2005 World Toilet Summit at The Waterfront Centre, Belfast, on September 27.