

Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri

Secretary General of the Synod



Lorenzo Baldisseri was born in San Pietro in Campo, Barga, Italy, on 29 September 1940. The youngest of seven children, he entered the seminary in Pisa, where in addition to theology and philosophy he also studied piano. He was ordained a priest on 29 June 1963. He holds a licence in dogmatic theology and a doctorate in canon law, with a thesis entitled: "The Nunciature in Tuscany". In 1971 he entered the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy where he graduated two years later. He also studied at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music and then studied polyphony and sacred music with Domenico Bartolucci. When he entered the diplomatic service of the Holy See in 1973 he was sent to Guatemala and El Salvador as an official. One year later he was promoted to secretary. Subsequently he worked in the nunciatures of Japan, Brazil, Paraguay and France. Between 1986 and 1991 he served in the Pontifical representation to Zimbabwe. In 1991 he was sent to Haiti, which was in serious political and social turmoil including a coup d'état.

On 15 January 1992 he was appointed titular Archbishop of Diocletiana and Apostolic Nuncio to Haiti. He received his episcopal ordination on 7 March of that year. In Haiti he lived through a difficult moment for the country which at the time was experiencing conflict, social tension and violence, including that against the Church. He remained there until 1995, when he was appointed Apostolic Nuncio to Paraguay — a country which was transitioning to democracy. In 1999 he became Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal, and in 2002 as Nuncio to Brazil.

In 2012 he was called to Rome and began serving as Secretary in the Congregation of Bishops. Later he was appointed as consultor to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Secretary of the College of Cardinals. As Secretary he received the red biretta.

On 21 September 2013 Pope Francis entrusted to him the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops. He is serves as a member of the Congregation for Bishops and is a counsellor at the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

(Source: L'Osservatore Romano)