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Cardinal Robert Prevost, newly named Pope Leo XIV, appears on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on May 8. Leo XIV is the first pope to hail from the United States and was considered a wild card in the election. HANNAH MCKAY/REUTERS

‘Habemus papam’: New pope elected

John Bacon, Jorge L. Ortiz and Kim Hjelmgaard
USA TODAY

Bells tolled, thousands cheered and a band played as white smoke billowed from the chimney of Rome’s Sistine Chapel on May 8, announcing a new leader for the world’s 1.4 billion Roman Catholics.

Behind the scenes, the 267th pope entered a chamber in the chapel known as the Room of Tears – named for the emotional reactions of popes as they realize their

new responsibilities. A cardinal stepped onto the red velvet-draped balcony and announced the historic words: “Habemus papam” – “we have a pope.”

And Cardinal Robert Prevost, now Leo XIV, emerged and greeted the crowd: “Peace be with all you.”

It was an extraordinary moment: the first pope ever from the United States, and a wild card.

The 133 voting cardinals had spent the day shut off

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A new era begins

Read more about Pope Leo XIV, at [usatoday.com](https://www.usatoday.com) and in the Nation & World Extra section, a subscriber-only feature in your eNewspaper.

Ohio GOP may endorse Ramaswamy for governor as early as May 9

Jessie Balmert
State Bureau
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Ohio Republican Party will decide whether to endorse entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy for governor at its May 9 meeting.

Ramaswamy, an Evendale native and Upper Arlington resident, has already

scored key endorsements from President Donald Trump and statewide and national Republican leaders. But getting the nod from the Ohio Republican Party would be unprecedented this far out from the May 2026 primary.

Ramaswamy faces Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost and Morgan County’s Heather Hill in the GOP race to replace Gov. Mike DeWine, who cannot run

again because of term limits. To win the party’s endorsement, Ramaswamy will need support from two-thirds of the governing body’s 66 members.

In the past, the Ohio GOP has faced hand-wringing over whether to endorse a candidate at all. Endorsements for former Gov. John Kasich’s presidential bid and DeWine’s gubernatorial campaigns were met with some grumbling.

But Strongsville GOP leader Shannon Burns announced on May 7 that Ramaswamy had the votes to secure the endorsement. Burns, a member of the state GOP’s governing body, has previously opposed endorsements.

DeWine has encouraged fellow Republicans to delay an endorsement

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