

Pope Francis on Saturday installed 13 new cardinals, including the first Rwandan to hold the high rank during a consistory held Saturday, November 28.

The cardinals were installed in a ceremony, known as a consistory, that was markedly slimmed down because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Cardinals from Brunei and the Philippines could not travel and will receive their ring and hat from a papal delegate.

Because of Covid-19 only 10 guests per cardinal were allowed instead of the usual thousands at St. Peter's Basilica as the pope gave the men their ring and traditional red hat, known as a biretta.

From the 13 new cardinals, nine come from Italy, Malta, Rwanda, the United States, the Philippines, Chile, Brunei and Mexico. Four will be non-electors as they are over 80 and were given the honour after a long service to the Church.

The event was Pope Francis' seventh consistory since his election in 2013. He has now appointed 57% of the 128 cardinal electors. Thus far, he has appointed 18 cardinals from mostly far-flung countries that never had one, nearly all of them from the developing world.

This Saturday's consistory, Brunei and Rwanda got their first cardinals.

Cardinal Kambanda, 62, became the first in Rwanda's history, he has been leading the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Kigali since November 2018, previously was the Bishop of Kibungo Diocese since 2013 and has served different positions in the Catholic Church.