

POPE BENEDICT XVI

ELECTED POPE: April 19, 2005, on the 2nd day of the conclave, on the 4th ballot.

It was 3 days after his 78th birthday.

He was the 5th oldest pope to be elected since 1400.

As of June 19, 2010 he became the 7th oldest pope (since 1400).

On February 29, 2012 he would overtake the previous pope, John Paul II (#265) to become the 6th oldest.

Benedict XVI, in reality, is the 266th pope (when one recognizes the original Stephen II).

He is the 53rd non-Italian pope and the 6th that was a German. [Two other popes have come from regions that were under German control in the 'Middle Ages.'] The previous Germanic pope was **Victor II** (#154) in 1055.



TENURES: Pope for **5 years, 4.5 months** [1,976 days] on Sept. 6, 2010.

[Average length of the 265 papacies prior to Benedict XVI was 7.2 years. 63 papacies lasted between 5 to 10 years.]

Priest: June 29, **1951** [at 24, 59 years ago]. His older brother, Georg, was ordained at the same time.

Bishop: March 24, **1977** [at 50, 33 years ago]. *He is now the Bishop of Rome, the pope's fundamental post.*

Archbishop: München und Freising [i.e., Munich], March 24, 1977 to Feb. 15, 1982. [4.8 years]

Cardinal Priest: June 27, 1977 [at 50] to April 5, 1993 of *S. Maria Consolatrice al Tiburtino*.

Cardinal Bishop: April 5, 1993 [at 66] to April 19, 2005 of Velletri-Segni. [Also Ostia, when Dean in 2002.]

Vice-Dean, College of Cardinals: Nov. 9, 1998 [at 71]. **Dean, College of Cardinals:** Nov. 30, 2002 [at 75].
[elected each time, by secret ballot, by the cardinal bishops, voting for one among them.]

Prefect, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

President, International Theological Commission

President, Pontifical Biblical Commission



25 November 1981.
[moved to Rome]

Relinquished, April 2, 2005
upon the death of John Paul II
(#265) per the norms.
[23.3 years]

Cardinal for 32 years, 9 months. Participated in 3 conclaves: Aug. 1978, Oct 1978 & April 2005.

First pope to participate in more than 2 conclaves since **Clement XII** (#247), in 1730 – 19 popes prior.

ACADEMIA: University of Bonn [Germany]: 1959 – 1963.

University of Münster [Germany]: 1963-1969.

University of Tübingen [Germany]: 1966-1969.

University of Regensburg [Germany]: 1969-1977.

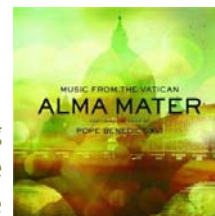
Member of the International Theological Commission [Vatican]: 1969-1977.

He is said to speak: German, Italian, French, English, Spanish and Portuguese.

He is an accomplished classical pianist. Grand piano in his quarters.

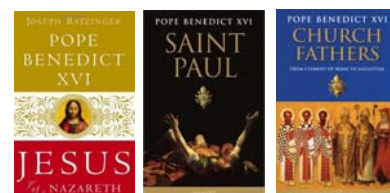
Participated in **Vatican II** [1962 – 1965] as a theological consultant (*peritus*) to German Cardinal Josef Frings [1887 – 1978]. He appeared a 'reformer.'

2009 CD featuring
the voice of the
pope



BOOKS: More than 40, starting in 1983. Most recent include:

Jesus of Nazareth (2007), *Jesus, the Apostles and the early Church* (2007), *Church Fathers: From Clement of Rome to Augustine* (2008), *Saint Paul* (2009), *Church Fathers: From Saint Leo the Great to Peter Lombard* (2008), *Heart of the Christian Life* (2010) etc.



'I am convinced that music really is the universal language of beauty which can bring together all people of good will on earth.' - Pope Benedict XVI (#266)

- ✦ *Summorum Pontificum* decree, in July 2007, which made it easier for congregations to celebrate the once *traditional* Roman Rite Mass (the **Tridentine Mass**), *in Latin*, as it appeared between 1570 to 1962, (and for the administration of many of the sacraments in traditional in pre-1967 form), though the landscape-altering Vatican II had advocated local vernacular-based liturgical practices. Catholic traditionalist applauded, while those that are not (and non-Catholics) saw this as another sign that this pope, an unabashed ‘conservative’ since the 1970s, like his predecessor (and ‘mentor’), was set on steering the Catholics towards intransigent, **pre-Vatican II** norms. Some, even ‘moderate’ Catholics, now worry that his June 2010 appointment of possibly ‘conservative’ Canadian Cardinal **Marc Ouellet** (a papabili), as the Prefect of the influential **Congregation for Bishops**, was an attempt to ensure that future Bishops would be more partial to **pre-Vatican II** norms.
- ✦ Angling for the ‘dissatisfied’ **Anglicans**, with an Oct. 2009 Apostolic Constitution, that permits painless conversion to Catholicism, for individuals and groups – with the possibility that they may even retain some of their existing Anglican traditions.
- ✦ **Relativism** [i.e., judging things based on their relative value, e.g., ‘He is your type, not mine.’] as a root cause of what ails society, since it devalues beliefs in absolute definitives – particularly when it comes to faith. He has stated that ‘*Christianity is the religion of reason.*’
- ✦ Though he has stated his commitment to the **ecumenical** stance adopted by **Vatican II**, he still, nonetheless, comes across, as having a very rigid, Catholic-centric, Catholic-first attitude.
- ✦ As a traditionalist, he continues to uncompromisingly endorse the Church’s prior conservative attitudes when it comes to birth control, homosexuality, genetic engineering, same sex unions and even the use of condoms to combat HIV. No surprises here.
- ✦ Waived the 5 year wait time prior for the start of the **beatification process** for his ‘mentor,’ friend and predecessor **John Paul II** (#265), thereby ‘fast tracking’ possible sainthood, within 6 weeks of John Paul II’s death.
- ✦ Has tried to downsize the bureaucracy of the **Roman curia**, which accounts for much of the **~2,670** people who work in **Vatican City**, a necessary move given that the Holy See has been running on a deficit budget for the last few years [the worldwide sexual abuse settlements being a factor].
- ✦ In his June 2009 **Caritas in Veritate** (Charity in Truth) he advocated **charity** and the need for a global redistribution of wealth (but did not specify how the Church would contribute to such an equalization).
- ✦ Re-introduction of ostentatious papal sartorial elements, that had been bypassed by the rather rugged John Paul II, such as the ermine fur trimmed, **red** velvet winter *mozzetta*, **red** shoes (made by the pope’s personal shoemaker), the **red**, *camauro*, papal cap and a **red** version of the wide-brimmed *cappello romano* hat worn, outdoors, by Catholic clergy. Rather apropos. When five, on meeting **Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber**, bedecked in all of his regalia, the young Joseph had expressed his desire to be cardinal. In his coat of



The pope's coat of arms



The pope with his *camauro*



The ermine-trimmed winter *mozzetta*

arms, however, he abandoned the customary, authoritative three-tier papal crown (tiara) in favor of a more modest bishop's miter.

SCANDALS & CONTROVERSIES:

- ✚ The **Catholic clergy abuse scandal**, though its primary roots go back at least 3 decades, and has been addressed by the Church with varying degrees of sincerity since c. 2000, continue to smolder and is liable to flare-up during the UK visit. Though the pope has never been implicated in any physical abuse (unlike his elder brother Georg), he continues to be plagued by allegations that he was actively involved in multiple cover ups, since the 1970s – when he was the Archbishop of Munich. The relentlessness of these claims, and the ongoing discovery of incriminating documents, have put a tarnishing patina on this pontificate. It could also prove to be the dominant facet of his legacy. The pope has publicly apologized, a number of times, for what took place, twice in 2008 during visits to Australia and the US and most recently, in March 2010, to the Irish.
- ✚ December 21, 2008, the Pope addressing the *curia* opined, though in somewhat oblique terms, that the protection of humanity from behaviors due to 'unconventional' **sexual orientation** was as important as safe guarding the environment. Suffice to say that quite a brouhaha ensued.
- ✚ In January 2009, there was widespread consternation, when the pope reinstated four ultraconservative clerics from the traditionalist, **Vatican II**-opposing **Society of St. Pius X (SSPX)** [founded in 1970 by 'rebel' French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre], who had been excommunicated twenty years ago, two of whom, British Bishop Richard Williamson [b. 1940] in the fore, continue to question the reality of the Holocaust.
- ✚ In Sept. 2006, 16 months into his papacy, the pope speaking at the University of Regensburg [where he had taught theology from 1969 to 1977] quoted a 1391 statement from a Byzantine emperor that was derogatory of **Muslims** and the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims were not amused. It was, at best, injudicious of the pope to have used that quote – now that he was a Head of State.
- ✚ The pope has been widely criticized on the world stage, at least twice, for not expressing adequate contrition for the **Nazi Holocaust**, most recently following his visit to the **Yad Vasjem** Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem during his trip to Israel, in May 2009. That he was a **Hitler Youth**, starting at 14 (per then requirements), and was a drafted German infantry soldier [1943 – 1945] makes this a thorny, emotive and delicate issue – to say the least.

VISITS OUTSIDE ITALY:

Germany	Aug. 2005 [4 days]	France [Lourdes]	Sep. 2008 [4 days]
Poland	May 2006 [4 days]	Cameroon & Angola	Mar. 2009 [7 days]
Spain	July 2006 [2 days]	Israel & Jordan	May 2009 [8 days]
Germany	Sep. 2006 [6 days]	Czech Republic	Sep. 2009 [3 days]
Turkey	Nov. 2006 [4 days]	Malta	Apr. 2010 [2 days]
Brazil	May 2007 [6 days]	Portugal	May 2010 [4 days]
Austria	Sep. 2007 [3 days]	Cyprus	June 2010 [3 days]
USA & UN	Apr. 2008 [7 days]	U.K.	Sep. 2010 [4 days]
Australia	July 2008 [10 days]		

POTTED PRE-CARDINAL BIOGRAPHY:

1927: Born the Saturday after Good Friday, **April 16**, to **Maria** (née Peintner from South Tyrol) [d. 1963], then a housewife (but previously a hotel cook) and her husband **Joseph Ratzinger** [d. 1959], a rural police officer. Youngest of three; brother **Georg** (b. 1924) who, as a priest, would become the Director of the Regensburg Cathedral Choir [and would later be implicated of abuse] and a spinster sister, **Maria**, who took care of Cardinal Ratzinger until her death in 1991. The pope's grand-uncle, **Georg Ratzinger**, was a priest who was also a member of the German parliament. The pope was baptized, **Joseph Aloysius Ratzinger**, the very morning of his birth, in the Parish of St. Oswald in Markt, by a Fr. Josef Stangl.



House where the pope was born in Markt am Inn

c. 1932: Joseph, at 5, meets **Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber**, bedecked in red, and wishes to be a cardinal. Attended school in **Aschau am Inn** [SE Germany], where the family lived 1932 – 1937. The school there, as of 2009, renamed after the pope. It is said that his father was often transferred because of his opposition to Nazism.

1936: March, first communion [9 years old]. **1937:** June, confirmation by **Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber**.

1939: Joins St. Michael's seminary in **Traunstein** [SE Germany]. He would have been 12.

1941: Joins the Hitler Youth [at 14], per the German requirements of that time.

1943 – 1944: Drafted to a German army anti-aircraft unit [possibly with others from his seminary]. Then trained with the German infantry. Some claims of ill health around this period. Unclear, how and where he served or whether he was transferred to another division.

1945: Said to have deserted his unit and returned to **Traunstein**. Taken a POW [but soon released] by American troops. Claims that the Americans had commandeered the Ratzinger household as a local HQ.

He joins the seminary of the archdiocese of **Munich and Freising**. His brother, wounded in the war, joins him.

1947: Joins *Herzogliches Georgianum* ('der dookie'), the theological seminary of the **Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich** [along with his brother].

1950: October 28, becomes a **sub-deacon** in Freising.

1951: June 29, ordained a priest [at the same time as his brother] cathedral of **SS. Mary and Corbinian**, Freising, by **Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber**, Archbishop of München und Freising.

1953: Doctorate in theology, University of Munich. Dissertation related to St. Augustine.

1957: Post-doctorate [i.e., Habilitation] on Saint Bonaventure. Commences his academic career the following year at Freising College, as a professor. *See page 1.*

1962 – 1965: Participates in all four sessions of **Vatican II**. *See page 1.*

1966: Chair of dogmatic theology, University of Tübingen. Liberally radical **Fr. Hans Küng** was also there.

1968: Marxist [religion-denouncing] College uprisings across Europe result in the pope abandoning his hitherto liberal views to become a conservative Catholic.



The Next Pope
After Pope Benedict XVI

Аннра Гуринге

The Next Pope
after Benedict XVI
by Anura
Guruge, 2010

1969: Founded, the now very influential, *Communio* theological Catholic Review.

Popes-and-Papacy.com by Anura Guruge