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Pope Benedict XVI poses in Alpeggio Pileo near his summer residence in Les Combes, in the V

Pope Benedict XVI poses in Alpeggio Pileo near his summer residence in Les Combes, in the Valle d'Aosta in northern Italy July 14, 2005. Pope Benedict died Dec. 31, 2022, at the age of 95 in his residence at the Vatican. (CNS/Reuters/Vatican pool)

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Vatican City — December 31, 2022
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Here are some important events in the life of Pope Benedict XVI.

April 16, 1927: Joseph Ratzinger is born in Marktl am Inn, Germany.

1945: With World War II ending, the 18-year-old conscripted soldier deserts from the German army and is held briefly as a U.S. prisoner of war.

June 29, 1951: He is ordained a priest along with his brother, Georg, and continues his theological studies.

1958-1977: He teaches theology at five German universities.

1962-1965: Father Ratzinger serves as an expert at the Second Vatican Council.

May 28, 1977: He is ordained a bishop, becoming the archbishop of Munich and Freising, Germany.

June 27, 1977: Pope Paul VI elevates him into the College of Cardinals.

1981-2005: He serves as prefect of the Holy See's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

April 19, 2005: Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, 78, elected pope and takes the name Benedict XVI.

Joseph Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI, is pictured in an undated photo. (CNS/KNA)

Joseph Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI, is pictured in an undated photo. (CNS/KNA)

Dec. 22, 2005: In a meeting with top aides at the Vatican, Pope Benedict insists the teaching of the Second Vatican Council must be read in continuity with the church's tradition.

Sept. 12, 2006: In a speech about faith and reason at the University of Regensburg, Germany, Pope Benedict cites a historical criticism of violence in Islam, setting off consternation and protests.

April 16, 2007: The first of what would be a three-volume work, "Jesus of Nazareth," by Pope Benedict goes on sale and is an immediate commercial success.

July 7, 2007: Pope Benedict issues an apostolic letter, "Summorum Pontificum," permitting wider use of the 1962 Roman Missal.

April 15-20, 2008: Pope Benedict visits Washington, New York and the United Nations, meets with victims of clerical sex abuse for first time.

January 2009: With Pope Benedict's approval, the Vatican issues a letter lifting the excommunication of four traditionalist bishops belonging to the Society of St. Pius X to clear the way for reconciliation talks with the group.

Nov. 4, 2009: With the apostolic constitution "Anglicanorum coetibus," Pope Benedict establishes personal ordinariates for Anglicans entering into full

communion with the Catholic Church.

July 15, 2010: With the approval of Pope Benedict, the Vatican releases streamlined procedures for handling accusations of clerical sexual abuse and removing from the priesthood those found guilty.

May 1, 2011: Pope Benedict beatifies Pope John Paul II.

Feb. 28, 2013: Pope Benedict, 85, becomes the first pope in almost 600 years to resign; he cited declining strength because of age.

2013-2022: Lives a "monastic" life of prayer and study, receives visitors in a renovated monastery near the Vatican Gardens. With prompting from Pope Francis, he appears in public for a number of significant church events at the Vatican.

Dec. 31, 2022: Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI dies at 9:34 a.m.

This story appears in the **The Ratzinger/Benedict XVI legacy** feature series. View the full series.