



The Holy See

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

PAUL VI

(1897-1978)

The second child of Giorgio and Giuditta Alghisi, Giovanni Battista Montini was born in Concesio, Brescia, on 26 September 1897. He was ordained to the priesthood on 19 May 1920. He studied philosophy, civil law and canon law. In 1923 he was appointed attaché at the Apostolic Nunciature in Warsaw and a year later returned and began serving in the Secretariat of State in the Vatican. During his service to the Holy See — under the Pontificates of Pius xi and Pius XII — he also taught the history of papal diplomacy at the Lateran University, until 13 December 1937 when Pius xi appointed him Substitute of the Secretariat of State. During World War II, he engaged in aiding refugees and Jews, also overseeing the Vatican Information Office. In November 1952 he was appointed Pro-Secretary of State for General Affairs and two years later he was appointed Archbishop of Milan. There, he employed new methods of evangelization in order to address the issues of immigration, materialism and Marxist ideology. On 21 June 1963 he was elected pope and took the name of Paul VI. Amid numerous challenges, he brought three periods of the Second Vatican Council to a successful conclusion, always encouraging the Church to be open in the modern world while respecting her tradition, always seeking communion among the Council Fathers. Paul VI began the practice of Apostolic Journeys beginning with the Holy Land, where his historic meeting with Athenagoras took place. His first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam* (1964), gave rise to the method of “the dialogue of salvation”. His other writings, include *Populorum Progressio* on the development of peoples. He also provided masterful teaching on the question of peace, also instituting the World Day of Peace. From the very beginning of his ministry, he had particular concern for the young, sharing with them the joy of faith. After a brief illness, he died on 6 August 1978 in Castel Gandolfo.

Pope Francis beatified him on 19 October 2014.

He was canonised on 14 October 2018 by Pope Francis.

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