Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI passes away

Photo taken from the Internet

Rome, December 31 (RHC)-- Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI died Saturday at the Vatican's Mater Ecclesiae monastery, said the director of the Holy See's press office, Matteo Bruni, who noted that further information will be provided as soon as possible.

The death of Benedict, 95, occurred at 09:34 local time, in the place that was his residence since 2013, when he resigned for health reasons, after eight years of pontificate.

Last December 28, Bruni confirmed in declarations to the press the worsening of Benedict XVI due to his advanced age, after Pope Francis alluded to the delicate health of his predecessor during his general audience.

The Supreme Pontiff asked that day for a "special prayer for Pope Emeritus Benedict, who is silently supporting the Church", after which he went to the Mater Ecclesiae monastery in the Vatican Gardens to visit the ailing prelate.

We must remember, he is very ill, "asking the Lord to console him, and to sustain him in this witness of love for the Church, until the end," Francis added, although Bruni later clarified that "for the moment, the situation remains under control, constantly monitored by the doctors."

In fact, last Friday the Vatican press director reported that Benedict's health was under control and noted that "last night the pope emeritus was able to rest well. Yesterday evening he also participated in the celebration of a Holy Mass in his room."

After his resignation in February 2013, Joseph Ratzinger moved to the Mater Ecclesiae residence, where he lived for nine years accompanied by his secretary, Monsignor Georg Ganswein, a doctor, a nurse and four consecrated laywomen, from the Memores Domini association, who looked after his care.

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