

## **The Pope, and his length of reign – an exploration of predictive astrology.**

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All too often astrological journals and magazines of the world are full of retrospective predictive astrology: looking at an event *after* it happens. This is such a strong tendency that now I almost wince if a major event occurs, knowing that there will be a plethora of articles analysing the astrology of *that* moment. This type of astrology really only belongs in the classroom or in the student section of publications. And to be really useful, such articles should always conclude with a methodology by which we can *use* the past event being analysed to help us predict future events of a similar nature. Sadly, however, this is often not the case.

At the moment there is a potential event waiting to occur and if we were a little closer to our medieval predecessors, we would be strongly preoccupied with its timing. This event, of course, is the death of the current Pope and the election of a new Holy Father. Such an event gives us, as astrologers, an easy chance to practise our predictive skills. For the event WILL happen, it is just a matter of the timing.

In the days of Guido Bonatti, an Italian astrologer who did a great deal of work for the cardinals and the Church in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the thinking, actions, life and death of the Pope were of major concern. It was important because it not only involved the different power-plays of the Cardinals but also preoccupied every political force in Europe. The influence of the Pope whose full title is:

*Bishop of Rome, vicar of Jesus Christ, successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Western Church, Patriarch of the West Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the province of Rome, Sovereign of the State of Vatican City<sup>1</sup>,*

was unquestionable and although today the Pope is unlikely to place an army in the field and be a strong military and political figure in Europe, his power is still unchallengeable.

The Pope is elected by a 2/3 plus one vote majority of the Cardinals from amongst their numbers<sup>2</sup> and once elected and anointed, holds the position for the rest of his life. His death therefore heralds a gathering of the world's cardinals in a closed session, some of which have lasted for over 7 months, where continuous lobbying, debating and voting occurs until one Cardinal receives the necessary number of votes.

We are now in the situation where the current pope John Paul II has just celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and every media report tells us of his failing health. So how long will the Pope live and when will he die? This is a question of great importance to many Catholics and would be the key question currently in the corridors of the Vatican. In

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition, Chicago USA.

<sup>2</sup> John Paul II changed this condition by adding a ruling stating that if the necessary majority of 2/3 plus one vote could not be achieved within 12 to 13 days of the gathering of the Cardinals, then a simple majority would be sufficient to elect a Pope.

the Middle Ages this would also have been a major question amongst the astrologers of the day and one could imagine if there had been astrological publications in that period, their pages would have been full of articles and opinions on the subject.

John Paul II was born, according to the Blackwell data base from Astrolabe, on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 1920 at about 12 noon EET Wadowice, Poland (49N53 19E30).<sup>3</sup>

I am always suspicious of the charts of powerful men who are born “about noon” as it was the tendency of the Roman emperors to change their birth time to “about noon” when claiming the crown, thereby gaining a horoscope that would better support their sovereignty. However, his mother died in 1928 as transiting Neptune passed over his Ascendant and at the commencement of his Papacy transiting Uranus was moving over his IC.

Although these events would not necessarily be sufficient to “prove” the chart to us, they are pointers that the chart is accurate enough<sup>4</sup> to apply the medieval techniques of gauging the length of life or life force of his chart.

There are two important planets involved in the question of life. One of these is called the *Hyleg*, considered to be the giver of life and the other is called the *Alcocoden* which allocates the number of years given. One first finds the hyleg and from that planet one determines the alcocoden. Once the alcocoden is found, it can be examined to determine how many years it gives to the chart in question.

There are many techniques for examining the length of life<sup>5</sup> of a chart but the method that I find gives me the best results is that of Guido Bonatti<sup>6</sup>.

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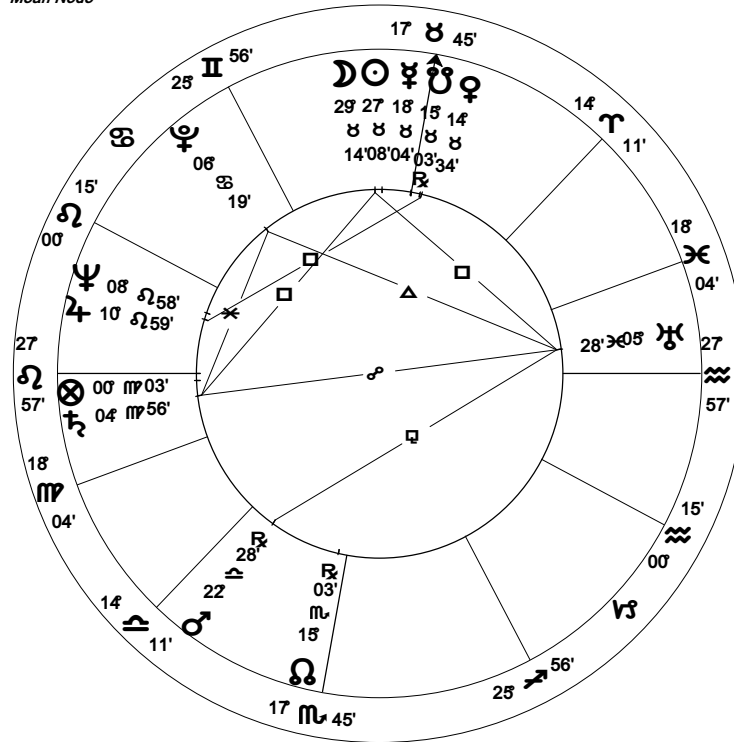
<sup>3</sup> The source quoted for the data is from a witness to the pope’s birth. This was originally quoted in the German astrological review “Meridian” # 3 (1981 issue) where Austrian Astrologer Sandor Belcsak quoted the witness. This information was then re quoted in the “CAO Times” for September 1984 in a letter from Dr Hans-Jorg Walter which is the sourced use in the Blackwell data base. There is a question over the correct time zone. Blackwell gives this as CET (-1 hour east) but Poland was functioning on EET which was –2 hours east and did not change to CET until 1922.

<sup>4</sup> Provided he is born roughly at noon.

<sup>5</sup> One should remember that this technique is not really looking at when a person will die but rather how strong is the life force in the chart. How many years have been allocated to the chart? Life ending by accident before that is always possible and life extending beyond its allocated length is considered “good luck” or more relevant in today’s world, good medicine.

<sup>6</sup> The source for this method is Robert Zoller’s book *Tools and Techniques of the Medieval Astrologers* self published in 1981. In this Zoller presents his translation of Guido Bonatti’s *Liber Astronomiae Tractatus Decimus*. The actual technique is given on page 32.

**John Paul II (Pope)**  
Natal Chart  
18 May 1920  
12:00 EET -2:00  
Wadowice, Poland  
49° 53' 01" N 20° 53' 00" E  
Geocentric  
Tropical  
Placidus  
Mean Node



## Pope John Paul II

### Bonatti's Technique<sup>7</sup>.

The Hyleg according to Bonatti is found firstly by examining the Sun. If it is in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> house then it may be Hyleg. OR if it is in the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> in a masculine sign then it may be the Hyleg.

- The Pope's chart has the Sun in Taurus in the 10<sup>th</sup> house so his Sun can be the Hyleg.

<sup>7</sup> A full break down of the different techniques is given in *Study Guide for Medieval and Ancient Astrology* Bernadette Brady, Astro Logos 1999 South Australia; or this material maybe found on the web site of the author [www.bernadettebrady.com](http://www.bernadettebrady.com).

The Sun can then become the Hyleg if it is able to form an alcoccoden. An alcoccoden is formed if another planet aspects the Hyleg which has dignity in the degree of the Hyleg.

The Pope's Sun is conjunct the Moon which is the exalted ruler of the sign of the Sun, therefore the Moon is the Alcoccoden of his chart.

When the Moon is alcoccoden and in good condition, it is allocated 108 years. Then any malefic that aspects it by conjunction, square or opposition reduces these years and any benefic which aspects it by conjunction, sextile or trine add to the years<sup>8</sup>.

Therefore with the exalted Moon as the Alcoccoden, we gain the following number of years.

Years of a strong Moon = 108 years.

The conjunction of the Sun could be considered to damage the Moon thus we remove the minor years of the Sun and calling the middle years of the Sun months, subtract those as well.

Years of the Moon = 108 minus the minor years of the Sun (19 years) = 89 years old.

Take the middle years of the Sun (69 ½ years) call them months and subtract then from the running total.

89 years – 5 years and 9 ½ months = 83 years and 2 ½ months.

**Number of years allocated to the Pope would be thus 83 years and a few months.**

Thus Bonatti would conclude that the Pope's allocated time on this earth would run out in July of 2003. After that time he would consider any serious transits or direction to the Pope's chart would indicate his death.

In following Bonatti's methods with other Popes' natal charts that I have on file I get the following results:

Pope John XXIII died at age 82 years and 9 months. Bonatti's method allocates 85 years of life.

Pope Paul VI died at age 81 years and 1 month. Bonatti's method allocates 84 years of life.

Pope John Paul I died at age 65 years and 11 months. Bonatti's method allocates 79 years of life. Bonatti would say that he died before his time.

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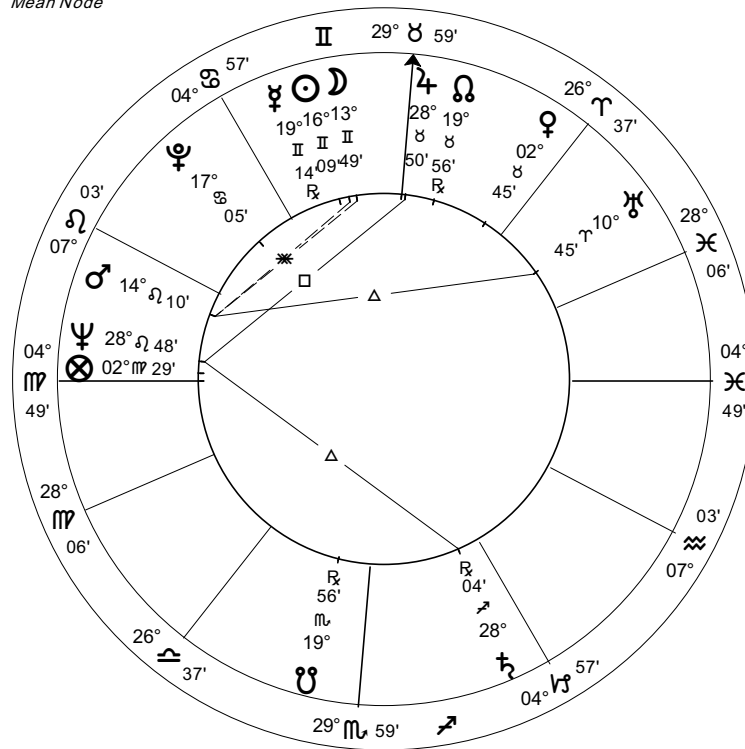
<sup>8</sup> See the table of planetary years at the end of the article.

## A Modern Astrological Technique

A more modern approach to this question is to recognise that the Pope's death sets off a series of precise events within the Catholic Church and the Vatican City. Nicholas Campion in his book *World Horoscopes* Cinnabar Books, Bristol, UK, 1995, gives the data for the Vatican City as 7<sup>th</sup> June 1929 at 11.00 am. CET Rome which was the restoration of the Papal state by Mussolini.

**384 VATICAN-CITY**  
Natal Chart  
7 Jun 1929  
11:00 CET -1:00  
ROME, ITALY  
41°N54'012"E29'  
Geocentric  
Tropical  
Placidus  
Mean Node

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The Vatican City

Since 1929 five popes have died.

**Pius XI** died 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 1939, when transiting Pluto sextiled the M.C.

**Pius XII** died 9<sup>th</sup> October 1958, when transiting Pluto made a conjunct to the Vatican Ascendant.

**John XXIII** died 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1963, when transiting Uranus at 1<sup>o</sup> 30' Virgo was about to conjunct the Ascendant.

**Paul VI** died 6<sup>th</sup> August 1978, when transiting Saturn 1<sup>o</sup> 15' Virgo was about to conjunct the Ascendant.

**John Paul I** died 28<sup>th</sup> September 1978, when transiting Saturn 7<sup>o</sup> Virgo had just completed a conjunction to the Ascendant.

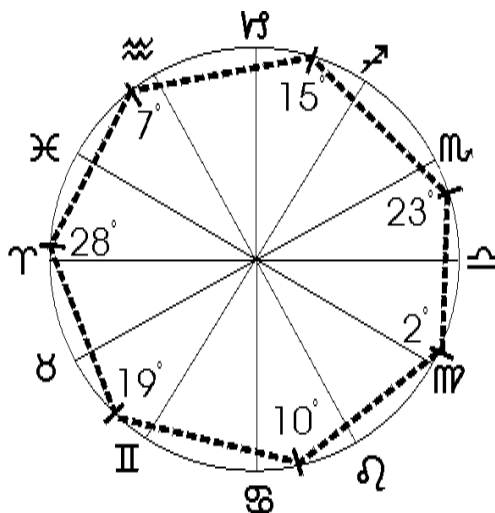
Between now and 2004, the period that Bonatti would emphasise from his methods, we have the following major transits to the Vatican City's chart:

1. Transiting Saturn will conjunct the Moon mid 2001 to early 2002
2. Transiting Pluto will opposing the Moon and Sun from early 2001 to early 2003
3. Transiting Uranus will conjunct the IC from mid 2003 to early 2004.

Any one of these would be sufficient to indicate the upheaval and transformation of the election of a new Pope.

### The Last 100 Popes

But there are others way we can astrologically look at this problem. There have been 265 popes including John Paul II. By taking the death dates of the last 100 popes - that is, every pope from Honorius II who died on the 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 1130 o.s. to John Paul I - we gain a collection of 100 dates that can be examined for astrological patterns.



7th Harmonic pattern of the last 100 Pope's death dates

I entered these 100 dates into *Jigsaw* and asked it to find any patterns that existed astrologically between these dates. *Jigsaw* came up with a pattern with contained 50 of the death dates.

The pattern belongs to the 7<sup>th</sup> harmonic formed by the location at the time of the deaths of the transiting outer planets of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto and the mean Node using a 2 degree orb. The “hot spots” found were the following zodiacal degrees : 19<sup>0</sup> Taurus, 10<sup>0</sup> Cancer, 2<sup>0</sup> Virgo, 23<sup>0</sup> Libra, 15<sup>0</sup> Sagittarius, 7<sup>0</sup> Aquarius, and 28<sup>0</sup> Pisces. (see figure)

When considering this pattern in this century alone, the deaths of Benedict XV, Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul I fit into this pattern. Only the death of Pius XI eludes the pattern.

When we look at future transiting positions, we note that the following points in this 7<sup>th</sup> harmonic pattern will be activated:

- Transiting Pluto will be moving through the middle degrees of Sagittarius in 2002.
- Transiting Neptune will be moving through the “hot spot” degrees of Aquarius from mid 2001 to late 2002.

### **Summary:**

We have three distinct and separate predictive systems that seem to be giving the same time period:

1. The medieval methods of Guido Bonatti imply that the Pope will die in or around 2003.
2. The transits to the Vatican City chart gives us an indication of 2002 and 2003 as being very intense times.
3. The 7<sup>th</sup> harmonic pattern formed by considering the death dates of the last one hundred popes is being activated by the outer planets in 2002.

By looking more closely at these indicators, we can see that by 2003 the Vatican City is having transiting Uranus conjunct its IC. This could well be a new Pope sweeping through the corridors of power. The current Pope is one of the longest-reigning popes in history<sup>9</sup> so a new pope on the throne would be a major upheaval to the Vatican. Such change would come fast as the Pope has absolute power. So, taking all of the above techniques into consideration, one could expect that John Paul II's reign could end by the last few months of 2002 or in the early months of 2003.

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<sup>9</sup> This honour currently belongs to Pius IX who reigned from 1846 to 1878, a period of 32 years.

## Discussion

Time will tell the accuracy of the prediction but more importantly if it does not come to pass in the above manner, then what would I have learnt which could help in future work of this kind? This particular prediction is firstly based on Guido Bonatti's method of determining the length of life which I have allowed to set the time period to be examined. Secondly, I have used historical patterns to select the most likely time within Bonatti's time period. If the Pope lives to his late eighties or into his nineties, then clearly Bonatti's methods have not yielded the results that I expect. However, the other two systems of a) transits to the Vatican City horoscope and b) working with the 7<sup>th</sup> harmonic pattern may still be valid but need to be focused into a different time frame. Good predictive work should always have a feedback loop involved in order to gain an understanding of where and how you may be incorrect.

THE YEARS OF THE PLANETS

	♃	♄	♅	♁	♂	♆	♁
Lesser	25	20	8	19	15	12	30
Middle	66.5	48	45	69.5	40.5	45.5	43.5
Greater	108	76	82	120	66	79	57