

[Vatican](#)

[Vatican News](#)



Archbishop Georg Gaenswein, former private secretary to Pope Benedict XVI, presents his book "Nothing but the Truth" during a reading in Altoetting, Germany on April 15. (Peter Kneffel/dpa via AP, File)

by Associated Press

[View Author Profile](#)

## [\*\*Join the Conversation\*\*](#)

Berlin — July 18, 2023

[Share on Facebook](#)[Share on Twitter](#)[Email to a friend](#)[Print](#)

The longtime secretary to the late Pope Benedict XVI won't be given a permanent job in the German archdiocese where he has settled, but will lead regular services at

Freiburg's cathedral and can take on "individual assignments" such as confirmations, church authorities said July 17.

The Vatican announced last month that Pope Francis had fired Archbishop Georg Gaenswein from his Vatican job and ordered him to return to his diocese of origin, Freiburg in southwestern Germany, without a new assignment. It was the final chapter in a falling-out that culminated with a [tell-all memoir](#) by Gaenswein that was highly critical of Francis.

Freiburg Archbishop Stephan Burger held a meeting with Gaenswein after his return to Germany, Burger's archdiocese said in a brief statement posted on its website July 17. It said that Gaenswein won't get a job in the archbishop's office or take on any "permanent, fixed activity for the archdiocese."

"In consultation with Archbishop Burger, it is possible for him to take on individual assignments such as confirmations or local celebratory masses," it said. In addition, Gaenswein will "regularly" lead services at Freiburg's cathedral as honorary canon starting this fall, it added.

Speculation about Gaenswein's future swirled following Benedict's Dec. 31 death and deepened a week later with the publication of the archbishop's memoir, *Nothing But the Truth: My Life Beside Pope Benedict XVI*.

## Advertisement

In the book, Gaenswein recounted his life serving Benedict but also acting as prefect of the papal household under Francis. He revealed palace intrigues, settled old scores and cast Francis in a deeply unfavorable light, puncturing the carefully curated notion that the relationship between the two popes, one active and one retired, had been a happy one.

Gaenswein stopped actively working as prefect of the papal household in 2020 following the publication of a previous book that got him in trouble with Francis, though he officially remained in the job until this year.

The latest book recounts Francis' sidelining of Gaenswein at the Vatican and describes the pontiff as insincere, illogical and sarcastic in deciding Gaenswein's fate. The book also said that Benedict had been critical of Francis' decision [to reinstate restrictions](#) on celebrating the old Latin Mass.