



A Life with Karol: My Forty-Year Friendship with the Man Who Became Pope

Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz

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This intimate, affectionate portrait of Pope John Paul II by his longtime secretary and confidant reveals fascinating new details about the opinions, hopes, fears, and dramatic life of this public man.

“I had accompanied him for almost forty years: twelve in Kraków and then twenty-seven in Rome. I was always with him, always at his side. Now, in the moment of death, he’d gone on alone. . . .And now? Who is accompanying him on the other side?”

—From *A Life with Karol*

Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz worked side by side with Pope John Paul II for almost forty years, enjoying unique access to both the public and private man. In *A life with Karol*, he provides a close-up glimpse into the Pope’s life and the critical events of his papacy.

Dziwisz was sitting next to the Pope during the assassination attempt in 1981. He recounts the Pope's reaction to 9/11, describing his thoughts and feelings on that day. And the Cardinal’s moving description of the Pope’s haunting memories of World War II uncovers the roots of the pontiff’s intense opposition to George W. Bush’s war on Iraq.

The two men shared moments of fun and spontaneity as well. Dziwisz writes about the times the Pope would slip out of the Vatican, wearing a Panama hat, to stroll the streets of Rome, and he describes the clandestine ski and hiking trips the pair made to escape the Vatican. His firsthand account of the Pope’s last years also reveals that John Paul II considered resigning. These stories and others lend added poignancy to Dziwisz’s extraordinary portrayal of the Pope’s courage and calmness during his final illness.

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