

# HOLY SEE

**Holy Father in the Father's House.** John Paul II, the 263<sup>rd</sup> successor of the Apostle Peter in the Episcopal See of Rome, died on 2 April at 9:37 p.m. His pontificate, of almost 27 years, was the third longest in the history of the Church. Karol Józef Wojtyła, known as John Paul II since his election to the papacy in October 1978, was born in Wadowice, a small city 50 kilometers from Kraków, on 18 May 1920. He was ordained to the priesthood on 1 November 1946 in Kraków. He received a doctorate in theology in 1948 in Rome, under the direction of the French Dominican, Garrigou-Lagrange. On 4 July 1958, he was named Auxiliary Bishop of Kraków by Pius XII. He received episcopal ordination on 28 September 1958 in the Cathedral of Wawel (Kraków), from the hands of Archbishop Eugeniusz Baziak. On 13 January 1964, he was named Archbishop of Kraków by Paul VI, who made him cardinal on 26 June 1967. He participated at Vatican Council II (1962-1965), with an important contribution in the drafting of the Constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*, and took part in all the Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops. From the beginning of his pontificate on 16 October 1978, Pope John Paul II made 104 pastoral trips outside Italy and 146 within Italy. As Bishop of Rome, he visited 317 of the 333 Roman parishes. Among his principal documents are: 14 Encyclicals, 14 Apostolic Exhortations, 11 Apostolic Constitutions and 45 Apostolic Letters. The Pope published five books: *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (October 1994); *Gift and Mystery: On the Fiftieth Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination* (November 1996); *The Poetry of John Paul II - Roman Triptych: Meditations* (March 2003); *Rise, Let Us Be On Our Way* (May 2004); and *Memory and Identity* (February 2005). John Paul II presided 147 beatification ceremonies and 51 canonizations, with a total of 482 saints. He celebrated nine Consistories, during which he created 231 Cardinals (as well as one "in pectore"). He presided six Plenary Assemblies of the College of Cardinals. He presided 15 Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops (six Ordinary; one General Extraordinary and eight Special). He has been defined as a "tireless advocate for peace," a "great promoter of the values of humanity," a "spiritual guide of more than a thousand million people," a "pioneer of dialogue among the various beliefs and a critical force of the Church's self-evaluation," and a "spiritual leader and statesman... with a moral authority for the world," a man who "labored tirelessly

to promote peace and unite peoples of all races, nations and religions," a "man of great courage and humility," a "servant of peace and justice," a "man of faith, a "man of faith, passionate for the cause of Jesus Christ," an "example of priestly fidelity," a "friend," a "spiritual father," a "witness of the love of God for the poor,"... an "angel of God among us." May he rest in peace!

**Vincentian Missionary named Bishop.** The **Holy Father**, named **Fr. Luis Solé Fa, C.M.**, pastor and Episcopal Vicar of the Vicariate of the *Mosquitia* (Diocese of Trujillo) as Bishop of Trujillo (Department of Colón y Gracias a Dios, *Honduras*). **Fr. Solé** is a member of the Province of Barcelona. He was born on 23 July 1946 in Tarragona (Spain). He entered the Congregation on 30 April 1968. He made vows on 31 May 1972. He was ordained a priest on 29 December 1973. The Holy See announced his appointment as bishop on 18 March. The diocese has a surface area of 250,00 km<sup>2</sup>, a population of 280,000 people of whom 230,000 are Catholic. It has 17 priests and 23 religious.

**Habemus Papam! A humble, simple man of deep conviction.** The life of **Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger**, now **Pope Benedict XVI**, was marked by world wars and by the Nazi persecution. He was born on 16 April 1927 in *Martkl am Inn (Germany)*. He was the youngest of three children, son of *Joseph* and *Maria*. His family, out of necessity, moved several times to different cities. In 1933, *Hitler* rose to power. **Cardinal Ratzinger** experienced the Nazi persecution against Catholics. He made his First Communion in 1935. In 1937, he and his family moved to *Hufschlang* (outside *Traunstein*), where he spent his adolescence. There he began his studies in classical languages. In 1939, he entered the minor seminary in *Traunstein*. In 1943, he was recruited into the Flak (antiaircraft squadron) in *Munich*. He experienced firsthand the aerial attacks against the city. In 1945, he deserted the army. He was taken by the Americans for several months. **Cardinal Ratzinger** entered the seminary of Freising. In 1947, he began to study theology in *Munich*. On 29 June 1951, the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, he was ordained a priest together with his brother. He was sent to *Precious Blood Parish* in *Munich*. In 1952, he began giving classes in the seminary. In 1956, he met **Karl Rahner**. In 1957, he received a doctorate with a thesis entitled: *The People and House of God in St. Augustine's doctrine of the Church*. After teaching dogmatic and fundamental theology in the *Higher School of Philosophy and Theology in Freising*, he continued his teaching activity in Bonn, from 1959-1963; in *Münster*, from 1963-1966; and in *Tubinga*, from 1966-1969. In this last year, he went to being professor of dogmatic theology and history of dogma in the *University of Regensburg*. From 1962-1965 he made a contribution to

the *Vatican Council* as an “expert”; he went as a theological consultor of **Cardinal Joseph Frings**, *Archbishop of Cologne*. His intense scientific activity led him to carry out important responsibilities at the service of the *German Episcopal Conference* and on the *International Theological Commission*. In 1972, together with **Hans Urs von Balthasar**, **Henri de Lubac** and other theologians, he began the magazine “*Communio*.” On 24 March 1977, he was named *Archbishop of Munich and Freising* by **Pope Paul VI**, and he received episcopal ordination on 28 May. He chose as his episcopal motto: *Cooperatores veritates (Collaborators of the truth)*. **Paul VI** created him *Cardinal* in the *Consistory* of 27 June of that year. **John Paul II** named him, on 25 November 1981, *Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, and *President of the Pontifical Biblical Commission* and of the *Pontifical International Theological Commission*. He was president of the commission for the preparation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Among his numerous publications, several books stand out: *Introduction to Christianity* (1968); *Dogma and Preaching* (1973); *Ratzinger Report: An Exclusive Interview on the State of the Church* (1985); *Salt of the Earth* (1996), among others. In November 2002, the *Pope* approved his election as *Dean of the College of Cardinals*. In the *Roman Curia*, until the death of **John Paul II**, he was a member of the Council of the *Secretariat of State for Relations with States*; of the *Congregations for Oriental Churches*, *Divine Worship and the Sacraments*, *Bishops*, *Evangelization of Peoples*, *Catholic Education*, as well as the *Pontifical Councils for Christian Unity and Culture*; and of the *Commissions for Latin America* and *Ecclesia Dei*. He was elected *Pope* on 19 April 2005, becoming Pontiff number 265, successor to **John Paul II**. He chose the name **Benedict XVI**. On 24 April, 5th Sunday of Easter, he began his ministry as *Bishop of Rome* and *Pastor of the Universal Church*.