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Holy See provides additional information about the Pope's death

Updated news release from the Vatican Information Service.

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Pope John Paul II dies at 84

VATICAN CITY, APR 2, 2005 (VIS) - The Holy Father died at 9:37 this evening [2:37 p.m. EST] in his private apartment.

At 8 p.m. the celebration of Mass for Divine Mercy Sunday began in the Holy Father's room, presided by Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz with the participation of Cardinal Marian Jaworski, of Archbishop Stanislaw Rylko and of Msgr. Mieczyslaw Mokrzycki.

During the course of the Mass, the Viaticum was administered to the Holy Father and, once again, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

The Holy Father's final hours were marked by the uninterrupted prayer of all those who were assisting him in his pious death, and by the choral participation in prayer of the thousands of faithful who, for many hours, had been gathered in St. Peter's Square.

Present at the moment of the death of John Paul II were: his two personal secretaries Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz and Msgr. Mieczyslaw

Mokrzycki, Cardinal Marian Jaworski, Archbishop Stanislaw Rylko, Fr. Tadeusz Styczen, the three nuns, handmaidens of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who assist in the Holy Father's apartment, guided by the Superior Sr. Tobianna Sobódka, and the Pope's personal physician Dr. Renato Buzzonetti, with the two doctors on call, Dr. Alessandro Barelli and Dr. Ciro D'Allo, and the two nurses on call.

Immediately afterwards Cardinal Secretary of State Angelo Sodano arrived, as did the camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church, Cardinal Eduardo Martínez Somalo, Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, substitute of the Secretariat of State, and Archbishop Paolo Sardi, vice-camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church.

Thereafter, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, dean of the College of

Cardinals, and Cardinal Jozef Tomko also arrived.

Tomorrow, Divine Mercy Sunday, at 10:30 a.m., a Mass for the repose of the soul of the Holy Father will be celebrated in St. Peter's Square, presided over by Cardinal Angelo Sodano.

At 12 noon, the Marian prayer of Easter time, the Regina Coeli, will be recited.

The body of the late pontiff is expected to be brought to the Vatican Basilica no earlier than Monday afternoon.

The first General Congregation of Cardinals will be held at 10 a.m. on Monday April 4 in the Bologna Hall of the Apostolic Palace.

Tens of Thousands Throng to St. Peter's to Pray for Pope

VATICAN CITY, APR 2, 2005 (VIS) - Pope John Paul died at 9:37 this evening as more than 70,000 faithful were gathered in St. Peter's Square to pray the rosary. They had been flowing into the square all day long - as they had all day yesterday - in ever increasing numbers, of all ages and from all continents and walks of life, families large and small, Catholics and non, cardinals and bishops, priests and seminarians, men and women religious.

Following the rosary, presided over by Cardinal Edmund Szoka, and the announcement by Archbishop Leonardo Sandri to the crowd in St. Peter's Square that the Pope had died, Cardinal Angelo Sodano led a prayer for John Paul II. Archbishop Sandri then announced that Cardinal Sodano would preside at Mass tomorrow morning at 10:30 in St. Peter's Square. People remained in the square for further prayers as the

bell in the left tower of St. Peter's Basilica began its death toll, one of the signals to the world that the Pope has died.

Functions of the Camerlengo Following the Pope's Death

VATICAN CITY, APR 2, 2005 (VIS) - In Pope John Paul II's 1996 Apostolic Constitution "Universi Dominici gregis" on the vacancy of the Apostolic See and the election of the Roman Pontiff, paragraph 17 reads as follows concerning the duties of the camerlengo of Holy Roman Church, who currently is Cardinal Eduardo Martinez Somalo:

"As soon as he is informed of the death of the Supreme Pontiff, the Camerlengo of Holy Roman Church must officially ascertain the Pope's death, in the presence of the Master of Papal Liturgical Celebrations, of the Cleric Prelates of the Apostolic Camera and of the Secretary and

Chancellor of the same; the latter shall draw up the official death certificate. The Camerlengo must also place seals on the Pope's study and bedroom, making provision that the personnel who ordinarily reside in the private apartment can remain there until after the burial of the Pope, at which time the entire papal apartment will be sealed; he must notify the Cardinal Vicar for Rome of the Pope's death, whereupon the latter shall inform the People of Rome by a special announcement; he shall notify the Cardinal Archpriest of the Vatican Basilica; he shall take possession of the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican and, either in person or through a delegate, of the Palaces of the Lateran and of Castelgandolfo, and exercise custody and administration of the same; he shall determine, after consulting the heads of the three Orders of Cardinals, all matters concerning the Pope's burial, unless during his lifetime the latter

had made known his wishes in this regard; and he shall deal, in the name of and with the consent of the College of Cardinals, with all matters that circumstances suggest for safeguarding the rights of the Apostolic See and for its proper administration. During the vacancy of the Apostolic See, the Camerlengo of Holy Roman Church has the duty of safeguarding and administering the goods and temporal rights of the Holy See, with the help of the three Cardinal Assistants, having sought the views of the College of Cardinals, once only for less important matters, and on each occasion when more serious matters arise."

The 26 Years of John Paul II: 3rd Longest Papacy in History

VATICAN CITY, APR 2, 2005 (VIS) - At 4:45 in the afternoon of October 14, 1978, ten days after the funeral of Pope John Paul I, 110 cardinal

electors, and 88 persons selected to assist them, entered into conclave, sealed off from the world, to elect his successor.

At 6:18 p.m., on October 16, white smoke appeared from the small chimney of the Sistine Chapel, thus signaling that the cardinal electors had chosen a new Roman Pontiff. Twenty-seven minutes later, Cardinal Pericle Felici appeared on the central loggia of St. Peter's Basilica and announced the election of Pope John Paul II to the See of Peter with the words: "Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum Habemus Papam Carolum Wojtyla, qui sibi nomen imposuit Ioannem Paulum II."

At 7:15 p.m. the new pontiff, clad in the traditional papal white, appeared on the same balcony and spoke in Italian the words now familiar to tens of millions of people around the world: "Praised be Jesus Christ!"

"Dear brothers and sisters," he continued, "we are still all very saddened by the death of the very dear Pope John Paul I. And now the most eminent cardinals have called a new bishop of Rome. They called him from a far-away country, ... far, but always near in the communion of faith and the Christian tradition. I was afraid in receiving this nomination, but I did it in the spirit of obedience to Our Lord and with total trust in his Mother, the Most Holy Madonna.

"I don't know if I can express myself well in your - in our - Italian language. But if I make a mistake, you will correct me. And so I introduce myself to you all, to confess our common faith, our hope, our trust in the mother of Christ and of the Church, and also to begin again on this path of history and of the Church with the help of God and with that of men."

John Paul II, Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, archbishop of Krakow, was elected as the 264th Pope on the second ballot of the second day of the second conclave of 1978, just five months after his 58th birthday. Six days later, on October 22, 1978, his pastoral ministry was inaugurated.

Today, April 2, 2005, marked the 9,664th day of his pontificate, calculating from October 22, 1978.

His is the 3rd longest pontificate in the history of the papacy. The longest was that of St. Peter (precise dates unknown), followed by Pope Pius IX (1846-78: 31 years, 7 months, 17 days).

In his 26 and a half years as Pope, John Paul II held nine consistories in which he has created 232 cardinals, of whom one is "in pectore." He has created all but three of the 117 cardinal electors who will enter into conclave.

From the start of his pontificate, the Holy Father named over 3,500 of the world's nearly 4,200 bishops. He met each of them a number of times over the years, particularly when they fulfill their quinquennial obligation of a visit "ad limina Apostolorum."

He has written 14 encyclicals, 14 apostolic exhortations, 11 apostolic constitutions, 42 apostolic letters and 28 Motu proprio in addition to hundreds of other messages and letters. In preparation for the Jubilee Year 2000, Pope John Paul wrote the Apostolic Letter "Tertio Millennio Adveniente," dated November 10, 1994, and published four days later. He also created the Committee for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000.

He wrote five books: Crossing the Threshold of Hope (1994), Gift and Mystery (1996), Roman Triptych (poetry, 2003), Arise, Let us Be Going

(2004) and Memory and Identity (2005).

The 84 year-old Pope presided over 15 synods of bishops: six ordinary (1980, 1983, 1987, 1990, 1994, 2001), one extraordinary (1985) and eight special assemblies (1980, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998 (two synods) and 1999).

Over the years, the Holy Father undertook 104 pastoral visits outside Italy, the last of which was to Lourdes in August 2004. He made 143 trips within Italy and nearly 700 within the city and diocese of Rome, including visits to 301 of the 325 parishes of the diocese of which he is bishop, in addition to religious institutes, universities, seminaries, hospitals, rest homes, prisons and schools.

With his 247 foreign and Italian pastoral visits, Pope John Paul II reached the 1,167,295 kilometer

mark (700,380 miles), that is, over 28 times the earth's circumference or 3 times the distance between the earth and moon.

While in Rome, the Pope welcomed an average of one million people per year, including between 400,000-500,000 who attended the weekly general audiences in addition to those who came for special liturgical functions such as Christmas and Easter Masses, beatifications and canonizations. He also received approximately 150,000-180,000 people per year in audiences granted to particular groups, heads of state and governments.

At the start of John Paul's pontificate the Holy See had diplomatic relations with 85 countries. It now has relations with 174 countries, as well as with the European Union and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. It has relations of a special nature with

the Russian Federation and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

According to the Office of Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff, over the past 26 years the Pope has proclaimed 1,339 Blesseds in 143 ceremonies and 483 Saints in 52 ceremonies.

He founded the John Paul II Institute for the Sahel in February of 1984, and the "Populorum Progressio" Foundation for the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America in February of 1992. He also founded the Pontifical Academies for Life and for Social Sciences. In addition, he instituted the World Day of the Sick (celebrated annually on February 11) and World Youth Day (WYD). The 20th youth day will be celebrated this August in Cologne, Germany. The Pope himself chose the themes and

developed its contents in an annual Message to the Youth of the World.

Karol Jozef Wojtyla, known as Pope John Paul II since his election over 26 years ago, was born in Wadowice, a small city 50 kilometers from Krakow, on May 18, 1920. He was the second of two sons born to Karol Wojtyla and Emilia Kaczorowska. His mother died giving birth to a third child - stillborn - in 1929. His eldest brother Edmund, a doctor, died in 1932 and his father, a non-commissioned army officer, died in 1941.

He made his First Holy Communion at age 9 and was confirmed at age 17. Upon graduation from Martin Wadowita high school in Wadowice, he enrolled in Krakow's Jagiellonian University in 1938 and in a school for drama.

The Nazi occupation forces closed the university in 1939 and young

Karol had to work in a quarry and then in a chemical factory in Solvay to earn his living and to avoid being deported to Germany.

In 1942, aware of his call to the priesthood, he began courses in the clandestine seminary of Krakow, run by Cardinal Adam Stefan Sapieha, archbishop of Krakow. At the same time, Karol Wojtyla was one of the pioneers of the "Rhapsodic Theater," also clandestine.

After the Second World War, he continued his studies in the major seminary of Krakow, once it had reopened, and in the faculty of theology of the Jagiellonian University, until his priestly ordination in Krakow on November 1, 1946.

Soon after, Cardinal Sapieha sent him to Rome where he worked under the guidance of the French Dominican, Garrigou-Lagrange. He

finished his doctorate in theology in 1948 with a thesis on the topic of faith in the works of St. John of the Cross. At that time, during his vacations, he exercised his pastoral ministry among the Polish immigrants of France, Belgium and Holland.

In 1948 he returned to Poland and was vicar of various parishes in Krakow as well as chaplain for the university students until 1951, when he took up again his studies on philosophy and theology. In 1953 he defended a thesis on "Evaluation of the Possibility of Founding a Catholic Ethic on the Ethical System of Max Scheler" at Lublin Catholic University. Later he became professor of moral theology and social ethics in the major seminary of Krakow and in the Faculty of Theology of Lublin.

On July 4, 1958, he was appointed auxiliary bishop of Krakow by Pope Pius XII, and was consecrated September 28, 1958, in Wawel Cathedral, Krakow, by Archbishop Baziak.

On January 13, 1964, he was named archbishop of Krakow by Pope Paul VI, who elevated him to the cardinalate on June 26, 1967.

Besides taking part in Vatican Council II with an important contribution to the elaboration of the Constitution "Gaudium et Spes," Cardinal Wojtyla participated in every assembly of the Synod of Bishops since it was created by Paul VI in 1967.

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