



The Diocese of Knoxville

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MEDIA ADVISORY
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Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz to attend cathedral Dedication Mass Polish prelate was secretary to Pope St. John Paul II for nearly four decades

KNOXVILLE - A participant and witness to some of the most dramatic moments in the history of the Catholic Church in the 20th century is coming to the Diocese of Knoxville, both as a celebrant and a speaker.

Bishop Richard F. Stika has announced that Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, a longtime Vatican official and the loyal secretary and friend to Pope St. John Paul II, has accepted an invitation to concelebrate the Dedication Mass for the Diocese of Knoxville's new Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus on March 3, 2018.

Cardinal Dziwisz (pronounced GEE-vish) will also be a guest at the second "Conversation with the Cardinals" to be held the following night in the new cathedral.

"Cardinal Dziwisz is an international figure in the life of the Catholic Church," Bishop Stika added.

"He is a man of history. He was there when John Paul was shot in 1981. In fact, he fell into the lap of Cardinal Dziwisz, and Cardinal Dziwisz anointed the pope after the assassination attempt. When John Paul died (in 2005), Cardinal Dziwisz was at his side, and at the end when they closed the casket on John Paul, the Church has a tradition, a white veil is placed over the face of a pope before the casket lid is closed, and it was Cardinal Dziwisz who placed that veil on the pope's face at his funeral Mass.

"Historians will say it was Pope John Paul, along with Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, who brought down communism in Poland. Cardinal Dziwisz was a part of all that. He was with the pope all of the time," Bishop Stika added.

Cardinal Dziwisz was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Krakow, Poland, in 1963 by Bishop Karol Józef Wojtyła, later Pope St. John Paul II. He became the secretary to Pope St. John Paul II, serving in that position for nearly 40 years. He was ordained a bishop in 1998 and was elevated to cardinal by Pope Benedict XVI in 2006.

"We welcome Cardinal Dziwisz to the Diocese of Knoxville with open arms and great love," Bishop Stika said. "We are honored that he will participate in the Dedication Mass for our new cathedral, and we are excited that His Eminence will witness, in a very personal way, the vibrant faith and commitment to Jesus that our diocese lives each and every day."

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