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Malinski, Mieczyslaw. **Pope John Paul II: The Life of Karol Wojtyla.** Trans. P. S. Falla. New York: The Seabury Press, 1979. Hard Cover. 283 pages. \$10.95.

The recent official visit to Poland of Pope John Paul II has ignited the fires of hope for a better world in all faithful Christians, particularly those of Soviet bloc countries. The Polish reaction to the visit was well-documented in newspapers and on television

apparent, for instance, in the passage relating the details of his clandestine enrollment as a seminarian during the war years. In spite of the fact that the Nazis had closed all Polish seminaries to new students and in defiance of the extreme danger to himself, Karol Wojtyla became a priest and later helped his friend Malinski make the same decision. Malinski recalls Karol Wojtyla's unselfish work administering relief to destitute and ill students, as well as to refugees. Where there are gaps in the author's knowledge of Wojtyla's activities, he provides reminiscences by former neighbors, teachers, and classmates living in the Pope's birthplace of Wadowice; the remembrances of co-workers in a Cracow factory; and information provided by a nun who had been Wojtyla's personal secretary during his days as Archbishop of Cracow.

Malinski does not restrict his analysis to the extollment of Wojtyla's personal virtues only, but extends his discussion to the new Pope's professional qualifications. While the election of a Polish Pope surprised everybody, including Wojtyla himself, Malinski demonstrates that the Church was ripe for this kind of change. A man was needed who could bring together the East and the West in the mutual fight for human rights. Wojtyla's linguistic abilities as well as his successful church work, even under a Communist regime, made him the ideal candidate for the Papacy. As examples of the Pope's championing of ecumenism and individual human freedoms, Malinski cites Wojtyla's leading role at Pope John XXIII's Ecumenical Council of 1964 and at the 1976 Eucharistic Congress in Chicago. The author sums up Wojtyla's qualifications thus: ". . . there would not have been a Pope John Paul II if he had not had the experience he did. He knew what human dignity was, he knew Fascism at first hand, he had seen the exploitation of man by man and by the State" (p. 261).

It can only be hoped that, in spite of strict censorship policies, Malinski's inspirational book will somehow find its way into the hands of the devout but oppressed Christians of Lithuania. This would be a fitting tribute to the man who, in defiance of the Kremlin, appointed Julijonas Steponavičius in pectore to the College of Cardinals; and the first Pope who addresses the oppressed minorities of the world in their native tongues rather than in the languages of their oppressors.

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