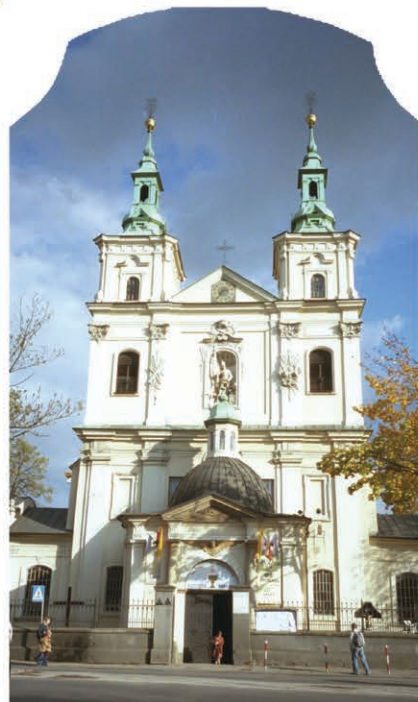




Father Karol Wojtyła
(later Pope John Paul II)



Basilica of Saint Florian
Krakow, Poland

***Father Bob receives a GRACE and GIFT from Saint John Paul II
through the instrument of
His Eminence Stanislaus Cardinal Dziwisz***



His Eminence Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz



Stanisław Kardynał Dziwisz
Arceybiskup Metropolita Krakowski

Krakow, August 1, 2015

Dear Fr. Lynam,

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your kind welcome in and the most beautiful celebration of the Holy Eucharist at St. Augustine Parish in Kendall Park last year during my visit in the USA. I was filled with joy to see His Excellency Bishop Paul Bootkoski, other priests and so many people who came to celebrate the thanksgiving Mass for the canonization of St. John Paul II. I was moved and inspired by the beautiful liturgy and the great banquet after it, which brought a significant donation for the International Center of St. John Paul II here in Krakow.

I would also like to mention how happy I was to see the great devotion to St. John Paul II in your parish. I want to thank you for your leadership as the pastor of the community and your personal love and dedication to this great Saint from Krakow. Your devotion can be an inspiration and example to many. I would also like to thank you for your ongoing support of the "Be Not Afraid" Center of St. John Paul II in Krakow through our the Foundation in Linden, led by Fr. Can. Mirosław Krol.

Fr. Lynam, to be known among your brother priests and the faithful as a great admirer and devotee of St. John Paul II is a beautiful description of your priestly life. Taking into a consideration all the above, I would like to share with you this joyful news that I decided to appoint you a Canon of St. Florian and St. John Paul II Chapter in Krakow. The official installation will take place on November 4, 2015 in the basilica of St. Florian in Krakow. My office will coordinate the details of that event with the President of the Canons Msgr. Grzegorz Szewczyk and also with you, Father, through Cau. Mirosław Krol who has expressed his joy to help with it. I hope you can arrange a visit in Krakow for this joyful occasion which will honor not only you but the whole diocese of Metuchen.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Stanisław Kardynał Dziwisz
Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz

Rev. Fr. Robert Lynam
St. Augustine of Canterbury Parish
45 Henderson Rd.
Kendall Park, NJ 08824
USA

*Father Bob receives a GRACE and GIFT from Saint John Paul II
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When Father Karol Wojtyla (later Pope John Paul II) was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Krakow, Poland, he was assigned to the Church of Saint Florian in Krakow. He served as an associate priest there for four years. Your first assignment as a newly ordained priest is always memorable and cherished. After my ordination I was assigned to Our Lady of Victories parish in Sayreville and served there also for four years. I treasure those years and many of my friendships to this day were the blessings of my first assignment. Father Karol Wojtyla also enjoyed his first assignment and later when he would be elected as the Successor of Saint Peter, Pope John Paul II would bestow a great honor to his first parish and elevate the Church of Saint Florian to a minor Basilica. He would also reinstitute the order of Canons who would be named to the Basilica of Saint Florian. Pope John Paul II would return to the Basilica of Saint Florian in August 2002 on his papal pilgrimage to Poland. There is a picture of Pope John Paul II wiping away a tear from his eye as he boarded the plane to go back to Rome knowing that would be his last visit to Poland.

In the establishment of Canons to the Basilica of Saint Florian a charter was prepared and approved by the Church. According to the Charter there are only a certain number of priests who can be given the title of Canon to this Basilica. His Eminence, Cardinal Stanislaus Dziwisz was the close collaborator and friend of St. John Paul II for over 40 years. He also served as Pope John Paul's personal secretary throughout his pontificate. Pope Benedict XVI appointed him as the Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow. Cardinal Wojtyla was also the Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow before being elected Pope in 1978. You may remember His Eminence visited our parish on May 17, 2014, to celebrate a Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving in honor of the canonization of St. John Paul II and he presented the first class relic of the "blood" of Saint John Paul II to the parish for veneration. Following the Mass, the parish hosted a wonderful reception in his honor and in jubilation for the new Saint! His Eminence truly had a wonderful experience and upon his return to Poland talked about his visit to the "Basilica" of Kendall Park!

A few weeks ago I received a phone call from Poland and it was Father Tomasz the personal secretary to Cardinal Dziwisz who was the translator for the Cardinal at the Mass on May 17th. As I answered the phone he said, “*am I speaking to Reverend Canon Robert Lynam?*” and I answered back, “*no Father Bob.*” Father Tomasz shared that the Cardinal’s visit to Saint Augustine on May 17, 2014, was the “highlight” of his trip! Recently a couple of the Canons of the Basilica of Saint Florian died, which has given the Cardinal an opportunity to appoint new Canons. As you can imagine the majority of the Canons are from the Archdiocese of Krakow and are Polish. Being appointed a Canon of this Basilica with its spiritual connection to Saint John Paul II is a way for the Cardinal of Krakow to honor his priests. From Cardinal Stanislaus Dziwisz’s visit to our parish and personally experiencing the love and devotion of Saint John Paul II present in our parish, especially in the pastor, the Cardinal proposed my name to fill one of the vacancies as a Canon of the Basilica of Saint Florian. The Cardinal convened a meeting of the Head Canon, Canon Grzegorz, along with the other Canons and my name was submitted for approval as per the charter. On Saturday, August 1st I received word from His Eminence that I have been appointed as a Canon of the Basilica of Saint Florian! There are only two other American Canons appointed to this Basilica, the Very Reverend Canon Mirosław Krol, the pastor of St. Theresa’s in Linden and the director of the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. John Paul II, and the Very Reverend Canon Charles Kelly, also of the Archdiocese of Newark.

It will be necessary for me to travel to Krakow and be installed as a **Canon of the Basilica of Saint Florian** by His Eminence, Cardinal Stanislaus Dziwisz, in the presence of the Canons at a special Mass. At this Mass I will be the only priest being installed as a Canon, so as you can imagine it will truly be a humbling, yet joyous occasion! I have invited His Eminence, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, who ordained me a priest, and the Most Reverend Archbishop Celestino Migliore, who is presently the Apostolic Papal Nuncio to Poland, who visited our parish several times to attend my Mass of Installation. The Cardinal chose the date of **Wednesday, November 4th**, the Feast of Saint Charles Borromeo, the “name day” of Saint John Paul II (Karol in

polish is Charles). **So truly this is a GIFT and GRACE from Saint John Paul II through the instrument of His Eminence Stanislaus Cardinal Dziwisz.** Following the Mass there will be a reception in my honor at the residence of the Basilica of Saint Florian which will be hosted by The Very Reverend Canon Grzegorz for the Cardinal as well as the other Canons of the Basilica.

The Basilica of Saint Florian is a historic church in Krakow. It stands at the northern end of Matejko Square and the former center of the medieval city of Kleparz, now a district of Krakow. The edifice marks the beginning of the Royal Road. The coronation route began there, with the rector of the university senate welcoming new kings. The Basilica of Saint Florian was also the starting point for royal funeral processions to Wawel Cathedral. St. Florian's Church was built between 1185 and 1216. It was burnt down many times in the 12th, 16th, and 17th centuries. Notably, during the Swedish siege of Krakow, General Stefan Czarniecki ordered the city's suburbs burned down. However, during the city-wide fire which consumed a considerable part of Krakow in 1528, the church – containing Saint Florian's relics survived. Since then, Saint Florian, usually portrayed as a Roman legion officer carrying water, has been revered in Poland and throughout the world as patron of firefighters. The "cross of Saint Florian" appears in the emblem you see on the trucks and uniforms of our firefighters.

In preparation for the installation Mass in Krakow it is necessary for me to obtain the appropriate clerical garb for the office of a Canon. I will be receiving a special cassock with magenta piping, a magenta sash, a unique surplice with red piping that is made specifically for the Canons of the Basilica of Saint Florian, and a magenta "manoletta" (similar to the garb that a Right Reverend Monsignor would have worn). At the Mass of Installation the Cardinal will present me with a gold ring that the Canons wear with Saint Florian on the front and the coat of arms of



Saint John Paul II on the inside. His Eminence will also present a special cross that is placed over the "manoletta" with the coat of arms of St. John Paul II and on the other side the coat of arms of Cardinal Stanislaus Dziwisz and upon my death this cross must be returned to the Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow.



There is a “heavenly connection” with being named a Canon for the Basilica of Saint Florian from my parents in heaven. I always share with you that God is speaking to us in the normal events of our lives. Allow me to share how my parents, Joseph and Dorothy, are part of this journey. The special “manoletta” “magenta cape” will be made in Czestochowa which is the major shrine in Poland in honor of the Blessed Mother. This shrine was very dear to Saint John Paul II. The papal sash that he wore the day he was shot in Saint Peter’s Square on May 13, 1981, stained with his blood now hangs next to the miraculous image of Our Lady of Czestochowa in gratitude for Mary saving his life that day. Once the “manoletta” is made it will be sent to Krakow for the Mass of Installation. It will be delivered on August 10th – which is my birthday. You may recall when my mother was alive I would send her roses on my birthday to thank her for the “gift” of my life! So this year on August 10th my mother and father from heaven will be sending me the “manoletta” and the color of the “manoletta” is magenta – a rose color! As I share with you many times, God is ALWAYS speaking to us, we just have to listen and truly to receive the news from Poland that the “manoletta” would be delivered on August 10th was a gift from God to this priest!!!!

So I am looking forward to my pilgrimage to Poland in November to be installed as a Canon of the Basilica of Saint Florian and I am grateful to Saint John Paul II and His Eminence, Cardinal Stanislaus Dziwisz for bestowing this great honor and privilege upon me. Upon my return I will share with you some pictures of this historic and spiritual event. We lovingly refer to our parish as the “Basilica of Kendall Park” and now our “Basilica” has a Canon – how appropriate!

In the Peace and Love of Christ,



Very Reverend Canon-elect Robert G. Lynam, KCHS

Pastor

A Gift From Heaven



*On my birthday, August 10th,
my parents from Heaven will send me
the “Manoletta” - The Canon Cape*