

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

Phone: +49 / 4106 / 804806; Fax: +49 / 4106 / 804807
E-Mail: bq@bucer.de; <http://www.bucer.org/bq.html>

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BQ 458 – No. 63/2016

Schirmmacher says regarding the Pope: “Wise at 80 and not silent at all”

Pope Francis: “There will not be a coffee break with the Pope today”

(Bonn, 17.12.2016) Thomas Schirmmacher paid tribute to Pope Francis, the head of the Catholic Church, upon the occasion of the Pope’s 80th birthday. Schirmmacher acknowledged that Pope Francis is above all a man of integrity who makes the most unusual proclamations and promises come true.



The Pope expresses his pleasure regarding the first copy of “Coffee Breaks with the Pope” © L’Osservatore Romano (Photo 305822_28092016)

had Pope Francis become Pope sooner – after all, he came in second place in the previous conclave – Schirmmacher answered that in his view the question is whether Pope Francis would have had the wisdom then. Pope Francis reportedly said that he fundamentally changed his views at an older age. The Pope, according to Schirmmacher, is “Wise at 80 and not silent it at all.”

The best example is the worship service which opened the Reformation Year in Lund (Sweden). The Pope not only participated in Lund as a guest but was also a host. Schirmmacher opened his book “Coffee Breaks with the Pope” with the story of how the idea of ‘Lund’ came into being and that the first comments by the Pope regarding it came just a few weeks after he was installed as Pope.

When asked whether it would not have been better

Chronology of “Coffee Breaks with the Pope”

1. **April 12, 2016:** Approval to use a photo taken by the papal photographer as the book’s cover photo. The approval for the use of a dozen additional photos taken by the papal photographer came later.

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Text & Technology:
Titus Vogt (ViSdP)
Vorderer Kamp 52a, D-25479 Ellerau
Phone: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 06
Fax: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 07
E-Mail: Titus.Vogt@bucer.de



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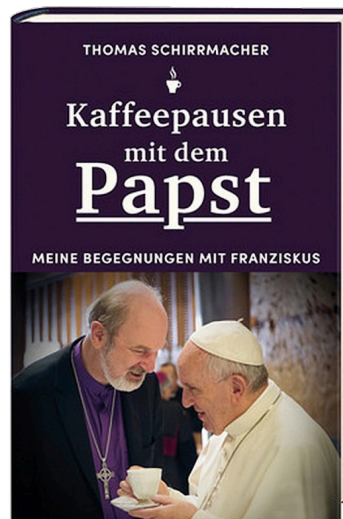
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2. **June 10, 2016:** The cover and title are presented to the Pope in a large discussion round. The Pope responds: “Coffee Breaks with the Pope.’ That’s rather witty. It makes me curious.”
3. **June 22, 2016:** It becomes public. The Pope makes the following welcoming comment: “Where can I find my ‘Coffee Breaks’?”
4. **September 28, 2016:** The first copy is delivered. The Pope: “We’ll see each other in Baku.”
5. **September 28, 2016:** The book is delivered to Cardinal Koch, to whom the book was dedicated, in the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.
6. **October 5, 2016:** Official letter of acknowledgment from the Secretariat of State of the Holy See.
7. **October 2, 2016:** Discussion of the book and a tribute to the papal photographer in Baku (Azerbaijan).
8. **October 12, 2016:** Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions (CSCWC). The Pope: “‘Coffee Breaks with the Pope’ is truly a good book. However, there won’t be a coffee break with the Pope today since I have to go to the general audience.”
9. **October 12, 2016:** In a small ceremony during a joint meal attended by the Secretaries of Christian World Communions in Rome, Cardinal Koch is honored before the leaders of denominations from around the globe for his efforts related to the “ecumenism of martyrdom” as was expressed in the dedication of Schirrmacher’s book. [See [BQ 455.](#)]
10. **October 31, 2016:** The opening chapter of the book “Coffee Breaks with the Pope” becomes reality in Lund (Sweden). The Pope: “I am delighted that you are here.”
11. **November 5, 2016:** The first 1,000 copies of “Coffee Breaks with the Pope” are sold immediately after Lund.



Discussion of the book and a tribute to the papal photographer in Baku © BQ / Martin Warnecke



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 Vorderer Kamp 52a, D-25479 Ellerau
 Phone: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 06
 Fax: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 07
 E-Mail: Titus.Vogt@bucer.de

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Downloads and Links:

- [Photo 1](#): The book cover with the photo by the papal photographer
- [Photo 2a](#): The cover is presented to the Pope © BQ / Martin Warnecke
- [Photo 2b](#): The cover is presented to the Pope: from the left: Schirmmacher, Pope Francis, Geoff Tunnicliffe © BQ / Martin Warnecke
- [Photo 3](#): The book is announced to the public © BQ / Martin Warnecke
- [Photo 4a](#): The Pope expresses his pleasure regarding the first copy of “Coffee Breaks” © L’Osservatore Romano (Photo 305822_28092016)
- [Photo 4b](#): The Pope shows his gratitude for the first copy of “Coffee Breaks” © L’Osservatore Romano (Photo 305824_28092016)
- [Photo 4c](#): The Pope reads the dedication of “Coffee Breaks” © L’Osservatore Romano (Photo 305837_28092016)
- [Photo 6](#): Discussion of the book and a tribute to the papal photographer in Baku © BQ / Martin Warnecke
- [Photo 8](#): The General Secretary with Pope Francis, in the middle: The Pope greets Thomas Schirmmacher © L’Osservatore Romano (Photo 00011_12102016)
- [Photo 9](#): Thomas Schirmmacher during his tribute to Cardinal Kurt Koch 2 (from the left): Thomas Schirmmacher, Diop Ganoune, General Secretary of the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions (CSCWC) and of the Seventh-day Adventists, Martin Junge, President of the CSCWC and the General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, Cardinal Kurt Koch, the delegate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate © BQ / Martin Warnecke
- [Photo 10](#): What was prefigured in the first pages of “Coffee Breaks” becomes true in Lund © BQ / Martin Warnecke
- Reports on the book “Coffee Breaks”:
 - <http://www.jesus.de/druckansicht/blickpunkt/detailansicht/ansicht/kaffeepause-mit-dem-papst204455.html>
 - <http://www.pro-medienmagazin.de/gesellschaft/kirche/detailansicht/aktuell/oekumene-bei-einer-tasse-kaffee-97922/>
 - http://www.ead.de/fileadmin/daten/dokumente/eins/EINS_Magazin_3-16_Web_gesamt.pdf (pp. 24-25)

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