

Political Papacy: John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Their Influence

Chester Gillis

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Pope John Paul II was famous as the most visible and politically active Pope of all time. He took his positions with great personal integrity, yet his views variously pleased and angered citizens on the right and the left. His inaugural appearance as Pope in his native Poland helped spur Solidarity and the fall of the communist bloc, yet he recently chided George W. Bush and Western world leaders for excessive capitalist policies, citing their actions as a factor in deepening world poverty. He took exception to the Liberation Theology of Central American Church leaders who viewed the philosophy as vital to the region's future well being. His positions on family, sexuality, and reproductive issues have been welcomed by many, but viewed as out of step with the reality of the times by many Church members. The book also considers Benedict XVI and his continuance of the conservative agenda set by John Paul II. This compact anthology is the first book to focus on the political legacy of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI. It brings together articles to present this legacy from a variety of viewpoints to give the reader a well-considered portrait of John Paul II and Benedict XVI--as men, as world citizens, and as religious leaders of a Church of one billion members who today comprise one sixth of all humanity. The final pages look to the future of the Papacy and Catholicism in the twenty-first century.



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