Schirrmacher 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”

Schirrmacher presents the Pope the cover of the book “Kaffeepausen mit dem Papst” (Coffee breaks with the Pope) © BQ / Martin Warnecke Thomas Schirrmacher paid tribute to Pope Francis, the head of the Catholic Church, upon the occasion of the Pope’s 80th birthday. Schirrmacher acknowledged that Pope Francis is above all a man of integrity who makes the most unusual proclamations and promises come true.

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.

Schirrmacher 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 had Pope Francis become Pope sooner – after all, he came in second place in the previous conclave – Schirrmacher 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 Schirrmacher, is “Wise at 80 and not silent it at all.”

Chronology of “Coffee Breaks with the Pope”

- **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.
- **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.”
- **June 22, 2016:** It becomes public. The Pope makes the following welcoming comment: “Where can I find my ‘Coffee Breaks’?”
- **September 28, 2016:** The first copy is delivered. The Pope: “We’ll see each other in Baku.”
- **September 28, 2016:** The book is delivered to Cardinal Koch, to whom the book was dedicated, in the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.
- **October 5, 2016:** Official letter of acknowledgment from the Secretariat of State of the Holy See.
- **October 2, 2016:** Discussion of the book and a tribute to the papal photographer in Baku (Azerbaijan).
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.”

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.

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.”

November 5, 2016: The first 1,000 copies of “Coffee Breaks with the Pope” are sold immediately after Lund.

Links and photos online ...