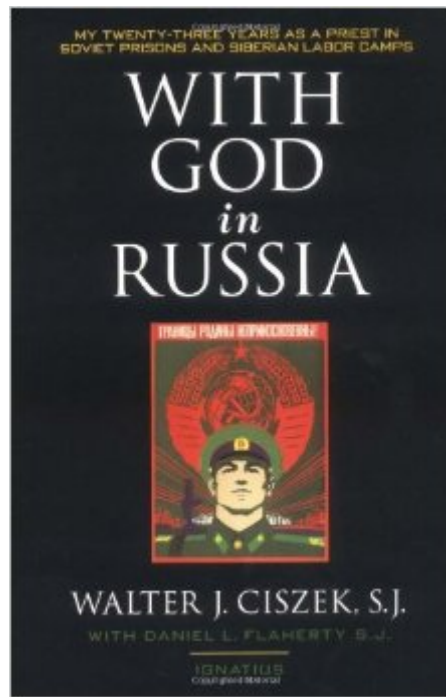


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With God In Russia



Synopsis

Father Walter Ciszek, S.J., author of the best-selling *He Leadeth Me*, tells here the gripping, astounding story of his twenty-three years in Russian prison camps in Siberia, how he was falsely imprisoned as an "American spy", the incredible rigors of daily life as a prisoner, and his extraordinary faith in God and commitment to his priestly vows and vocation. He said Mass under cover, in constant danger of death. He heard confession of hundreds who could have betrayed him; he aided spiritually many who could have gained by exposing him. This is a remarkable story of personal experience. It would be difficult to write fiction that could honestly portray the heroic patience, endurance, fortitude and complete trust in God lived by Fr. Walter Ciszek, S.J.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

". . . it isn't often one gets the chance to be around when a man comes back from the dead" (From the Introduction). This is Father Ciszek's odyssey from class bully to rough-hewn, intrepid minister inside and out of the best accommodations the Soviet Union had to offer for their political prisoners: the best KGB interrogators, the best watered-down soup, the best concrete bunks, the best mix of sociopathic criminals mixed in with the prisoners of conscience, the best conditions guaranteed to reduce the expense of maintaining an extensive number of prisoners who, however inadvertantly, irritated the authorities. There are few spiritual insights--this isn't a letter from Saint Paul, nor Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn--but his experiences speak for themselves. Fr. Ciszek endured the rigors of intense interrogations followed by five years of imprisonment in cells, both isolated and crowded,

within Moscow. He endured another ten years in worker camps inside the Arctic Circle. In spite of the hardships, he managed to minister to a captive audience supplied by the Russian authorities. He heard confessions and said Mass with provisions supplied by the prisoners themselves, such as fermented raisins for sacramental wine, and a paten made of nickel. There were some minor disappointments. He had his picture snapped at Lenin's tomb days before he was airlifted from the national prison Lenin founded. For all the suffering he endured out of love for the people of the Soviet Union, I overlooked his touristy affectation. Besides, he DOES offer a prayer for Lenin's soul: "He was a man, after all, . . . and he may be in need of more prayers than he's getting here." Also, I would have appreciated a few pages relating how he readjusted to life back home.

Father Cizek, S.J., (1904-1984) wrote *WITH GOD IN RUSSIA* which is book of memoirs while incarcerated in the Soviet Union for fifteen years. Cizek's book is full of surprises, Father Cizek writing is very graphic, descriptive, and detailed. His writing is suspenseful and leaves the reader with the view of "what happens next." Father Cizek wrote about his younger years of which he was not proud. He was a tough kid and a bully. Without an explanation or an epiphany, Father Cizek suddenly decided to study for the priesthood. Later, in spite of his father's objections, Cizek made another sudden decision to join the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). As an aside, the Jesuits can be very obedient and/or very defiant. Father Cizek fit both descriptions. He was athletic and did exhaustive exercises. Cizek was also impulsive and once committed to "a cause," he was not to be denied. Cizek volunteered for the Vatican's *Russicum* which was a missionary school to send Catholic priests to the Soviet Union to celebrate Mass and the Sacraments. The undersigned viewed this effort as suicide missions given the vigorous police state under Stalin. Father Cizek went to Poland and then volunteered to go to the USSR under the guise of a worker in the Urals where he worked hard. An interesting anecdote is that of a Polish Jewish fellow who was fooled by the promises of "The Workers' Paradise." This young man was shocked by the harsh realities of Soviet society. While working in the Urals as a logger, Father Cizek was discovered as a Catholic Jesuit priest and was charged as a spy for the Vatican. He was held in the infamous Lubyanka prison for about five years under very harsh conditions. When W.W.

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