

Pope John Paul II 1920-2005

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Clockwise from left:
John Paul II visits Mother Teresa in Calcutta, 1986.
In Rome, just days after his election as pope, 1978.
Forgiving his would-be assassin, Mehmet Ali Agca, who shot the pope in 1981.
Embracing Monik, 3, in Madagascar, 1989.
Background: Celebrating Mass in Krakow, Poland, 2002.



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"Pray for the brother who shot me, whom I have sincerely forgiven." —1981



REUTERS/Vatican

Clockwise from left:

Karol Jozef Wojtyla poses on his First Communion Day, c. 1928.

Greeting Chicagoans on his first U.S. visit as pope, 1979.

Meeting President Ronald and Nancy Reagan in Fairbanks, Alaska, 1984.

Visiting Native Americans in Yellowknife, Canada, 1984.

Reeling from a bullet in the abdomen fired by Mehmet Ali Agca, May 13, 1981. A six-hour surgery repaired the damage.

As a young seminarian (undated).



REUTERS/Vatican

May 18, 1920:
Karol Jozef Wojtyla
is born in
Wadowice, Poland.

1932:
His brother,
Edmund, dies
of scarlet fever.

1939:
Nazis invade Poland.
Jagiellonian University,
where Karol is a student
and actor, is forced
underground. He becomes
a stonecutter at a quarry.

1942:
Enters Krakow's
underground
seminary, which
will lead to his
name appearing
on the Nazi
blacklist.

1946:
Ordained a priest;
sent to Angelicum
University in Rome.

1929:
His mother,
Emilia, dies.

1937:
Karol and his father
move to Krakow.

1941:
His father, also
named Karol, dies.

1953:
Becomes assistant professor of moral
theology at Catholic University of Lublin.



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“It’s not right that the standard of living of the rich countries should seek to maintain itself by draining off a great part of the reserves of energy and raw materials that are meant for the whole of humanity.” —1997



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1958:
Ordained auxiliary bishop of Krakow.

1964:
Becomes archbishop of Krakow.

1978:
Elected the 264th pope, the first Polish pope and the first non-Italian pope since Adrian VI (1522-23). Takes the name John Paul II.

1979:
First encyclical: *Redemptor Homnis*. First visit to Poland. Swiss theologian Hans Küng loses license to teach theology.

1962-65:
Attends all sessions of the Second Vatican Council.

1967:
Becomes a cardinal.

1979:
Meets President Jimmy Carter and is the first pope to visit the White House.



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Clockwise from left:

The pope is received by President Jimmy Carter in 1979, marking the first time any pope visited the White House.

Addressing the faithful in an undated photo.

At a snowy Mass in Sarajevo, 1997.

At World Youth Day in Denver, 1993.

Waving to well-wishers from his Popemobile in Bydgoszcz, Poland, 1999.

A 1995 visit to Baltimore included this moment with a young girl.

Taking some time to walk and pray in the woods during his 1984 visit to Canada.



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“No to war! War is not always inevitable. It is always a defeat for humanity.”

—2003

1981:
The pope is shot and wounded in St. Peter's Square by Turkish terrorist Mehmet Ali Agca. Four days later the pope publicly forgives him.
Encyclical: *Laborem Exercens*.

1983:
Visits Nicaragua. Publicly scolds Father Ernesto Cardenal. New Code of Canon Law issued.

1986:
First interreligious World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi. First-ever papal visit to synagogue in Rome.

1989:
Official visits of President George H.W. Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev—the first time a pope met with the head of the Soviet government.

1982:
Meets President Ronald Reagan. Meets Yasser Arafat about peace in the Middle East.

1985:
First World Youth Day, Rome.

1987:
10-day visit to U.S.

1988:
Encyclical: *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*.



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“The church cannot be an association of free thinkers.”
—1981



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“Be not afraid! Open up—no, swing wide the gates to Christ. Open up to his saving power the confines of the state, open up economic and political systems, the vast empires of culture, civilization, and development.”
—1978



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- 1989-1991: Fall of Berlin Wall and dissolution of Soviet Union. The pope is credited as being instrumental in these events.
- 1991: 50th international pastoral visit: Portugal. Encyclical: *Centisimus Annus*.
- 1992: New Catechism of the Catholic Church published.
- 1993: 8th World Youth Day, Denver. Encyclical: *Veritatis Splendor*.
- 1994: Meets President Bill Clinton. *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* declares prohibition against women priests “definitive.”
- 1994: Pastoral visit to U.S. East Coast.
- 1995: Encyclicals: *Evangelium Vitae*, *Ut Unum Sint*.
- 1995: Pastoral visit to U.S. East Coast.

The claim to build a world without God
has been shown to be an illusion.

—1990

Clockwise from below:

Visiting a family in M'Banza-Congo, Angola, 1992.

Praying at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem during his Jubilee Year pilgrimage, 2000.

Blessing the people in St. Peter's Square during his *Urbi et Orbi* message, Christmas, 2004.

Archbishop Piero Marini, right, kneels by the coffin of Pope John Paul II during the funeral in St. Peter's Square on April 8, 2005.

Mourners huddle in sleeping bags under the colonnades of St. Peter's Square on the eve of the funeral.



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“God of our fathers, you chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your name to the Nations: We are deeply saddened by the behavior of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer, and, asking your forgiveness, we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant.”

—Message left by John Paul II at the Wailing Wall, Jerusalem, March 26, 2000





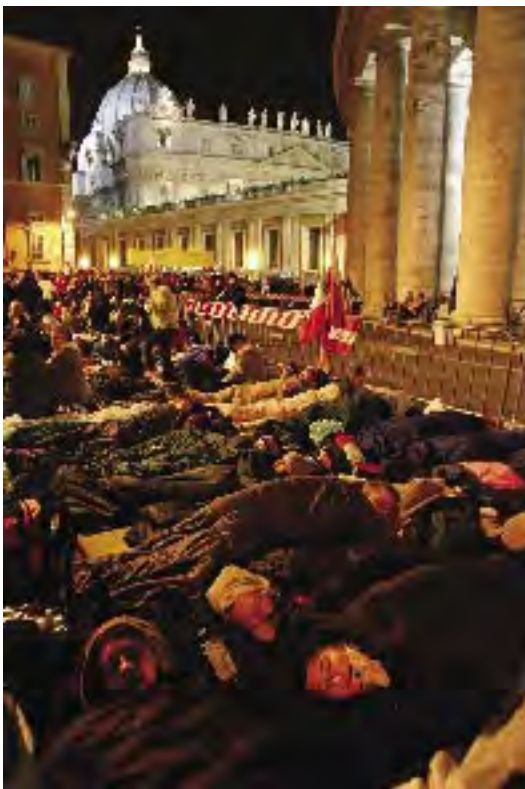
REUTERS/Stefano Rellandi

A Final Blessing

"I leave you now with this prayer: that the Lord Jesus will reveal himself to each one of you, that he will give you the strength to go out and profess that you are Christian, that he will show you that he alone can fill your hearts.

"Accept his freedom and embrace his truth, and be messengers of the certainty that you have been truly liberated through the death and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

"This will be the new experience, the powerful experience, that will generate, through you, a more just society and a better world. God bless you, and may the joy of Jesus be always with you. Amen."



REUTERS/Stefano Rellandi



REUTERS/Dylan Martinez

2005:

The pope's health is in rapid decline due to complications from Parkinson's Disease. He receives a tracheotomy to assist in breathing, and then a feeding tube to supply nourishment. For the first time in his pontificate he is unable to celebrate Easter liturgies.

April 2, 2005:

After 26 years, 5 months, and 17 days as pope, John Paul II, 84, dies.