Blessed Pope John XXIII (1958-1963)
Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli

“Vocabor Johannes - I wish to be called John”

LORD, YOU KNOW THAT I LOVE YOU.” (John 21:17)

1881 Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli was born on November 25th, 1881 the fourth of fourteen children to Giovanni and Marianna Roncalli, near the village of Sotto il Monti (“under the mountain”) in the region of Bergamo, in Northern Italy. His father was a sharecropper.

1892 Angelo entered the minor seminary.

1895 Angelo entered the senior seminary and began to keep a journey, a habit he kept up for the rest of his life.

1901 Early in the year, Angelo travelled to Rome to complete his studies at the Pontifical Roman Seminary, the Apollinare. In November 1901, Angelo had to leave the seminary to complete a year of mandatory military service.

1904 Angelo obtained his doctorate in theology in July and less than a month later and he was ordained a priest. Fr. Roncalli said his first mass at the tomb of St. Peter at which he repeated the words of Peter “LORD...YOU KNOW THAT I LOVE YOU.” (John 21:17)

1905-1914 Fr. Roncalli served as secretary to Giacomo Radini-Tedeschi, Bishop of Bergamo, for nine years. He gained first-hand experience and a broad understanding of the problems of the working class as he travelled around with “his bishop”. He became known as the “the Bishop’s Shadow.” Fr. Roncalli also taught at the local seminary during these years.

1915-1918 During World War I Fr. Roncalli was mobilized to serve in the army as a medical orderly in a Bergamo hospital treating wounded soldiers. He was promoted to the rank of sergeant.

1925 Apostolic Visitor/Delegate to Bulgaria: Pius XI consecrated Fr. Roncalli a bishop and sent him as an Apostolic Visitor/Delegate to the Diocese of Areopolis. He remained in Bulgaria for almost ten years where he fostered relations between the Holy See and other Christian communities. The people esteemed him for his great compassion during the 1928 earthquake.
1934 **Apostolic Delegate to Turkey and Greece**: in December 1934 Archbishop Roncalli was named Apostolic Delegate to Turkey and Greece. In his farewell Christmas sermon to Bulgarians, he extended an invitation to any them, regardless of religion or social status, to always feel free to visit him. As Apostolic Delegate in Turkey and Greece he was able to engage in dialogue successfully with both Muslims and Orthodox Christians.

During the war Archbishop Roncalli distinguished himself with efforts to aid Jews fleeing Nazi persecution.

1944 **Papal Nuncio to Paris**: Archbishop Roncalli was named Papal Nuncio to Paris in 1944.

1953 **Cardinal of Venice**: In 1953, Pius XII elevated Archbishop Roncalli to a Cardinal and appointed him to Cardinal of Venice. He was very happy to be a pastor to his people and he put into practice the social justice beliefs he had been developing throughout his life.

1958 **Pope John XXIII**: At 4:50 p.m. on October 28th 1958, Cardinal Angelo Roncalli was chosen as the 261st pope taking the name of John XXIII, a name not used since the 14th century. He was 76 years old. He came to be known worldwide as a humble and attentive pastor. Within the city of Rome his identification with the poor showed itself almost immediately with his visits to slums, hospitals and prisons.

1959 Pope John XXIII surprised those who expected him to be a caretaker pope by calling the historic Second Vatican Council (1962–65).

1962 On October 11th, **Pope John XXIII opened the first session of the Second Vatican Council** which modernized the mass, bringing in contemporary music and local languages instead of Latin.

The International Balzan Foundation awarded him its Peace Prize in 1962. "For having contributed to maintaining peaceful relations between Nations, encouraging mutual understanding among peoples and establishing contacts outside the Christian community".

1963 April 19th **Pacem in Terris (“Peace on Earth”)** was published. Breaking with papal tradition, Pope John XXIII addressed the encyclical to all people of good will, and not just the Catholic faithful. Pope John acknowledged that there can be no peace without justice and he exhorted the world to dialogue on issues of justice, including the right to freedom of worship. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacem_in_Terris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacem_in_Terris)

1963 **Pope John XXIII died on June 3rd, 1963**. His final words before he slipped into unconsciousness were, “**Lord...you know that I love you.**” (John 21:17) This was the same prayer he said during his first mass at the tomb of St. Peter in 1904.

1965 On November 18th, Pope Paul VI declared Pope John XXIII a **Servant of God**.

1999 On December 20th, Pope John Paul II declared Pope John XXIII to be **Venerable**.

2000 On September 3rd, Pope John XXIII was **beatified** by Pope John Paul II.

2014 On Sunday, April 27th, Blessed Pope John XXIII will be **canonized** with Blessed Pope John Paul II.
POPE JOHN XXIII

“Il Buon’ Papa - The "Good Pope"

October 28th, 1958- June 3rd, 1963

In his first public address Pope John expressed his concern for reunion with separated Christians and for world peace. In his coronation address he asserted "vigorously and sincerely" that it was his intention to be a pastoral pope since "all other human gifts and accomplishments—learning, practical experience, diplomatic finesse—can broaden and enrich pastoral work but they cannot replace it."

One of his first acts was to annul the regulation of Sixtus IV limiting the membership of the College of Cardinals to 70. Within the next four years he enlarged the College of Cardinals to 87 with the largest international representation in history. (i.e. He consecrated fourteen bishops for Asia, Africa, and Oceania in 1962.)

Less than three months after his election Pope John XXIII announced that he would:

- Hold a Diocesan Synod for Rome.
- Convokel an Ecumenical Council for the universal Church.
- Revise the Code of Canon Law.

Despite much resistance from the Curia, the synod, the first in the history of Rome, was held in 1960; Vatican Council II was convoked in 1962, and the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code was appointed in 1963.

Pope John XXIII did all he could to establish relations with the Soviet Union, even calling on Khrushchev to act with courage in the Cuban missile crisis by withdrawing. He also called upon Vice-President Johnson to work for détente with the Soviet Union.

During his short papacy of less than five years, Pope John wrote eight encyclicals. His final encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, advocating human freedom and dignity as the basis for world order and peace, came out in April 1963, two months before his death. It is the first encyclical ever to be addressed to “all men of good will” rather than only the bishops and laity of the Roman Catholic.

Today, he is affectionately remembered as “The Good Pope”. His feast day is on Oct 11th.

**Source:**


**Glossary:**

*A Papal Encyclical* is the name typically given to a letter written by a Pope to a particular audience of Bishops. This audience of Bishops may be all of the Bishops in a specific country or all of the Bishops in all countries throughout the world. Pope John XXIII wrote *eight encyclicals* during his pontificate.
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BLESSED POPE JOHN XXIII  
(ANGELO GIUSEPPE RONCALLI)

October 28th, 1958 – June 3, 1963

Bishop of Rome  
Vicar of Jesus Christ  
Successor of the Prince of the Apostles  
Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church  
Primate of Italy  
Metropolitan Archbishop of the Province of Rome  
Sovereign of the Vatican City State  
Servant of the Servants of God

Episcopal Motto: Obedience and Peace

Born: Nov. 25, 1881 (Italy)  
Ordained Priest: Aug. 10, 1904  
Consecrated Bishop: March 19, 1925  
Created Cardinal: Jan. 12, 1953  
Elected as Supreme Pontiff: Oct. 28, 1958  
Installed as Supreme Pontiff: Nov. 04, 1958  
Died: June 3, 1963 (Age 81)

Titular Archbishop of Areopolis (1925.03.03 – 1934.11.30)*  
Apostolic Delegate to Bulgaria (1931.10.16 – 1935.01.12)*  
Titular Archbishop of Mesembria (1934.11.30 – 1953.01.12)*  
Apostolic Administrator of Constantinopole (Turkey) (1935.01.12 – 1944.12.23)*  
Apostolic Delegate to Greece (1935.01.12 – 1944.12.23)*  
Apostolic Delegate to Turkey (1935.01.12 – 1944.12.23)*  
Apostolic Nuncio to France (1944.12.23 – 1953.01.12)*  
Patriarch of VENICE (Italy) (1953.01.15 – 1958.10.28)*  
Cardinal-Priest of S. Prisca (1953.10.29 – 1958.10.28)*  
Supreme Pontiff (1958.10.28 [1958.11.04] – 1963.06.03)*  
Prefect of Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office (1958.10.28 – 1963.06.03)*  
Prefect of Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches (1958.10.28 – 1963.06.03)*  
Prefect of Sacred Consistorial Congregation (1958.10.28 – 1963.06.03)*

Source: http://www.gcatholic.org/hierarchy/pope/J23.htm

*Note: Dates: Read as Year; Month; Day