

Name: _____

Pope John Paul II

Who was John Paul II? He is best known for his work as the Pope, the head of the Catholic Church, but in his life he was also, among other things, an actor, a factory worker, and a professor.

He was born in Poland in 1920 as Karol Wojtyla. Both his mother and his only brother died when he was a child. His father died when he was a young man. When the Nazis took over Poland in 1939, they closed his university. Because of the Nazis, he had to study for the priesthood in secret. Later, Communists took over Poland, and he lived under their rule for decades. Yet when Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II on October 16, 1978, he said, "Be not afraid!"

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Birth Name: **Karol Wojtyla**

Born: **May 18, 1920**

Died: **April 2, 2005**

Home country: **Poland**

The **264th** pope in history

The **3rd longest serving** pope in history (**26 years**)

First **non-Italian** pope in **455 years**

As pope, made **104 visits** outside Italy.

Being pope is a big job. About **1.1 billion** people are Catholics. This means that **one out of six people on this planet** consider the Pope as their spiritual leader.

A pope's main job is to help his followers to love God and others. Pope John Paul II took an amazing **104 trips** around the globe, and Catholics and non-Catholics alike flocked to see him.

He also met with heads of state from all over the world. He had **738** such meetings, and he often spoke out on political issues.

Which can get you into trouble. In 1981, a man tried to assassinate him. The Pope publicly forgave him, and even visited him in prison.

Pope John Paul II particularly loved young people. He was the first pope to have **World Youth Days**. At these enormous rallies, huge crowds of youth would talk, sing, and pray with him. In 1995, the World Youth Day in the Philippines may have been the **largest human crowd in history** – 5 to 7 million people at the final Mass.

Pope John Paul II died on April 2nd, 2005.

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Exercise A

1. What is Pope John Paul II's birth name?
2. How old was Pope John Paul II when he died?
3. List a few sufferings Pope John Paul II had in his life.
4. What did he say when he became Pope?
5. One in _____ people on this planet is a Catholic.
6. How many trips did Pope John Paul II take outside Rome?
7. What special event for youth was Pope John Paul II the first to have?
8. What may have been the largest human crowd in history?
9. What do you think about Pope John Paul II?

Name: _____

Answer Key:

Exercise A

1 Karol Wojtyla

2.84

3.Any of:

death of mother, brother, father

had to leave University

had to study in secret

assassination attempt

lived under Nazis and/or Communists

4.Be not afraid!

5.six

6.104

7.World Youth Day

8.The final Mass at the 1995 World Youth Day in the Philippines.

9.Answers vary.