Pope St. John Paul II

1920–2005

Feast Day:
October 22

Karol Wojtyla was born in Poland. When he was a young man, a lot of evil things were happening in Europe. The Nazis were sending Jews, Catholics, and many other people to camps. At the camps those people were tortured and killed. Karol secretly went into seminary (a school that prepares men to be priests). He was made a priest soon after World War II ended.

Even though the war had ended, people in Poland were suffering. They were not free under a Communist government. Fr. Wojtkla was made Bishop of Krakow (Poland) in the 1960s. When he was elected Pope, he chose the name John Paul II. He helped people of Poland free themselves from the Communist party. Pope John Paul II also tried to help England come back to Catholicism.

Pope John Paul II founded World Youth Day. On World Youth Days, young Catholics from all over the world come together to be with the Pope and attend Mass he offers for them.

He wrote many important essays and books that helped people learn more about God. He died in April 2005. Thousands of people came to his funeral.