

Saint *Pope John Paul II*



REV. JUDE WINKLER, OFM Conv.

Imprimi Potest: Michael Kolodziej, OFM Conv., Minister Provincial of St. Anthony of Padua Province (USA)

Nihil Obstat: Rev. James M. Cafone, M.A., S.T.D., Censor Librorum

Imprimatur: ✠ Most Rev. John J. Myers, J.C.D., D.D., Archbishop of Newark

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The Writings of Pope John Paul II

BEFORE he was elected Pope, John Paul had written many poems, plays, and books. From the very beginning of his papacy, Pope John Paul II used his talent as a writer to produce a series of documents to teach the faithful about our religion.

Pope John Paul II wrote about Jesus the Redeemer, God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit. He wrote about the Blessed Virgin Mary for whom he had a great devotion. He wrote about the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation. He also wrote many letters to promote the value of the truth and to foster respect for life.

During his papacy, Pope John Paul II also oversaw the publication of two very important books that help guide the Church. The first is called the *Code of Canon Law*, a collection of all of the laws of the Church. Over time some of these laws had become confusing or were outdated. Thus, the Pope called for a new collection to guide the Church.

The other is called the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. This is a collection of all the things we believe about our Faith regarding God, the Church, the Sacraments, the Angels and Saints, heaven, hell, and purgatory, and many other things.

Saints and Blesseds

THE Holy Father taught that all people are called to holiness. One way he did this was by beatifying and canonizing more people than all the other Popes combined between 1594 and 1978.

Beatification is the step before someone is declared to be a Saint. The Church investigates all of the teachings of the person being considered, making sure that all of them are faithful to the Church's teachings. In addition, the Church examines the person's reputation and requires that two miracles be performed through the person's intercession.

Through canonization the Church officially declares a person to be a Saint. There must be one more miracle after beatification for this to occur.

St. Maximilian Kolbe, one of the Pope's first canonizations, died giving his life for another prisoner in a Nazi prison camp during World War II.

The Pope also canonized Padre Pio, a Capuchin Franciscan friar who had borne the wounds of Jesus on his hands, feet, and sides for fifty years.

He also beatified Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who cared for the poor and dying in India for many years.