

We Remember With Affection Pope John Paul II

Introduction

It is fitting to gather at this pivotal moment in our church. A great man has died and we have lost our leader. Today we know a deep sadness, but we have great hope. The Holy Spirit so alive in Pope John Paul II continues to guide the church. It is the Holy Spirit who brings us together and moves us to celebrate the life and death of our Holy Father. Therefore, we come together to pray for and remember this man of faith. We come together to rejoice in his life and to be challenged by his witness. In the words of so many young people who gathered in faith at the many World Youth Days presided over by this pope of almost two generations: John Paul Two, We Love You. Tonight (today) it is fitting to remember, pray, and celebrate.

Audience

This prayer invites young and old, parents and children, Roman Catholics and others of faith to offer their grief and their hope to God who loves us all. This prayer is intended for an intergenerational audience and can be celebrated at programs for religious education, youth group meetings, in Catholic schools, at parish gatherings, e.g. Parish Council or Committee Meetings or as a special gathering intended only for the purpose of remembering the Holy Father.

Environment

If possible, the space for the prayer should include any or all of the following: a portrait of Pope John Paul with the Paschal Candle and Cross placed nearby; the Altar or a covered prayer table, with lit candles and a simple arrangement of fresh flowers. A clay bowl filled with sand and lit charcoals sitting on top for incense could also be placed before the picture of the pope for use during the intercessions. It might be advisable to remind the gathered assembly that incense is a sign of our prayers being lifted up to God.

Materials Needed

- Catholic Bible
- 1 sheet of red, gold, and white construction paper and 1 marker per small group
- CD player and CD with chosen music or musicians with an appropriate sound system
- Incense, coals, sand, fireproof vessel for burning incense, matches
- Environmental supplies for prayer space

A Final Farewell and Commendation of Our Holy Father Pope John Paul II

Gathering Song

We Are One Body by Dana Scanlon in *Spirit and Song*, # 165
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Other Song Selections

- *Lord, Make Me a Channel of Your Peace*, OCP Publications
- *How Great Thou Art*, Manna Music, Inc.
- *Lord of All Hopefulness*, Hope Publishing Co.

Greeting

Leader: In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
All: Amen.

Leader: Peace be with you.
All: And also with you.

Call to Prayer

(This call to worship should be done by a young person.)

We Remember Pope John Paul II

We remember our beloved Pope John Paul. We are sad because we will miss his faith, his leadership, and most of all his love of Christ and the church. Yet we are joyful, because of the hope he shown us.

We remember Pope John Paul—his energy and vigor as our new, young pope so many years ago; his passion and commitment as a preacher and prophet; and his strength and courage in the face of pain and adversity.

We remember Pope John Paul—his unyielding opposition to evil and sin; his total dedication to the Gospel of Life and defense of the unborn; and his abiding love for the young church.

Tonight we remember our beloved Pope John Paul.

The Word of God

(After the readings are proclaimed, the assembly stands and says the response twice.)

Reading 1: Jeremiah 1: 4-8

All: Young people, be proud of the Gospel.
Young people, be proud of the Gospel.

Reading 2: 1 Timothy 4: 12-15

All: Young people, be proud of the Gospel.
Young people, be proud of the Gospel.

Reading 3: John 10:7-11

All: Young people, be proud of the Gospel.
Young people, be proud of the Gospel.

Remembrance Posters: Small Group Activity

(Before the service half sheets of red, gold, and white construction paper and a marker should be prepared, one for each small group. If time permits, the border of each half sheet should have the words "John Paul Two, We Love You" around it.)

In groups of 5 or 6 people, youth and adults mixed together, each person should share a memory, image, quotation, or comment about Pope John Paul II. Allow 3-5 minutes for this activity. After the sharing, each person should offer one word that, for him or her, best describes the pope. Record each person's word on the construction paper. The Remembrance Posters should be displayed in a prominent place in the parish church or school.

Commendation to the Blessed Mother

The leader should then invite the community to prayer. Reminding them of Pope John Paul's great love and devotion to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, a single decade of the Rosary, in honor of the first Glorious Mystery, the Resurrection, should be prayed for the repose of the soul of the pope.

Some of the assembly may not be familiar with the praying of the Rosary. The following brief instruction could be helpful: a decade of the Rosary consists of 1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's and 1 Glory Be. The leader begins with the Our Father, which everyone should pray in unison. He or she immediately follows with the recitation of the 10 Hail Mary's with the leader praying alone the first half ending with the words, ". . . thy womb Jesus." The assembly concludes the last half of the prayer each time. The leader then prays the first half of the Glory Be ending with the words, ". . . the Holy Spirit" and the assembly concludes that prayer as well. All should kneel for this prayer.

General Intercessions

(As the assembly stands for the Intercessions, an attendant should place incense on the coals.)

Leader: Tonight as we commend our shepherd, Pope John Paul II to the mercy of God, we lift our hearts and prayers to the Father.

Response: Let our prayers rise like incense.

Leader: For Pope John Paul II, lead him safely home to heaven, we pray . . .

Response: Let our prayers rise like incense.

Leader: For all those who lead the church, especially for the new pope soon to be elected, may they be examples of faith and love for all, we pray . . .

Response: Let our prayers rise like incense.

Leader: For peace in the world, may we, like Pope John Paul be peace doers and peacemakers, we pray . . .

Response: Let our prayers rise like incense.

Leader: For all the sick and suffering of the world and especially for young people who are victims of violence and oppression, we pray . . .

Response: Let our prayers rise like incense.

Leader: For parents, mothers to be, and all the unborn, may life be cherished in all its stages, we pray . . .

Response: Let our prayers rise like incense.

Leader: For all who have died, may they know eternal glory in Christ, we pray . . .

Response: Let our prayers rise like incense.

Leader: Lord, we call to you, come quickly to our aid. May our prayers rise like incense before you—the lifting of our hands—like an evening sacrifice (Psalm 141). As we commend our brother, Pope John Paul II to you, we give thanks for his leadership and love that guided the church for so long. Bring him home to heaven and grant your church consolation and peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Response: Amen.

Blessing

Leader

May the Lord bless you and keep you. R. Amen

May his face shine upon you,
and be gracious to you. R. Amen

May he look upon you with kindness,
and give you his peace. R. Amen

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. R. Amen.

[If the Leader is not a priest or deacon, replace the last line with:]

May the Lord bless us,
protect us from all evil
and bring us to everlasting life.

R. Amen

Sending Song

Cry the Gospel by Tom Booth in *Spirit and Song*, #168. Copyright, 1998, OCP Publications

Other Song Selections

- *Celebrate Youth*, Center for Ministry Development
- *Now Thank We All Our God*, GIA Publications
- *Precious Lord*, GIA Publications