



Saint Joseph Catholic Church

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Rev. Barry F. Crochet, Pastor

Rev. Godwin Nzeh CMF, Associate Pastor

Deacon Christopher Doumit, Pastoral Assistant

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MASS SCHEDULE [TEMPORARY]

Saturday Vigil Mass — 4:00 p.m.

Sunday — 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Monday and Friday — 6:45 a.m. at Our Lady of Victory

Wednesday — 6:45 a.m. at Saint Joseph

Tuesday and Thursday — 5:30 p.m. at Saint Joseph

First Saturday — 8:00 a.m. at Our Lady of Victory

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

Every Saturday from 3:00 p.m. to 3:40 p.m. and one-half hour before all weekday Masses, or by appointment during office hours.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday — 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

If possible please conduct parish business by phone or email.

RECEPTIONIST/BOOKKEEPER/CEMETERIAN

Mrs. Gail Borel — gail.borel@stjosephparishonline.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Mrs. Sherry Hebert — sherry.hebert@stjosephparishonline.org

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

The Adoration Chapel is closed until further notice. The Main Church is open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday for your convenience.

FUNERALS

A Funeral Service in church without Mass will be celebrated along with a graveside service at the cemetery.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

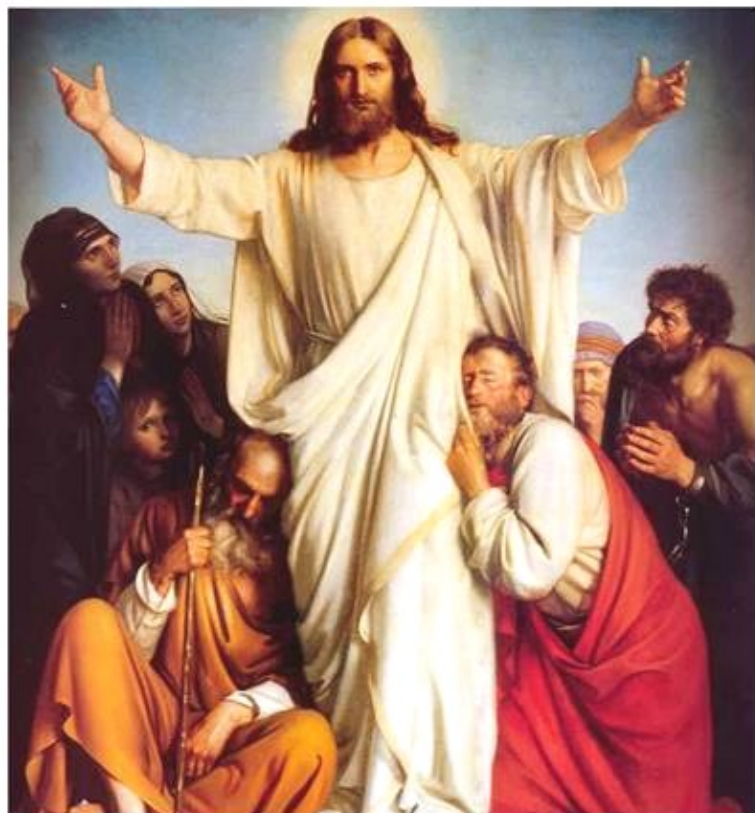
Baptism will be celebrated with godparents and immediate family only. Those with compromised immune systems should not attend. Families may opt to delay the baptism until the whole family can gather in celebration. In the case of an emergency Baptism is always permissible.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Weddings are to be celebrated according to the Rite for celebrating marriage outside of Mass with immediate family only. Engaged couples may wish to consider rescheduling their weddings, if possible.

SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

“Anointing of the Sick will remain available as needed by the faithful.”



Grant, almighty God, that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy, which we keep in honor of the risen Lord, and that what we relive in remembrance we may always hold to in what we do.

Please pray for our parish family members who are sick:

We invite you to submit the names of people who are in need of our prayers.



Lisa Adcock, Kendall Romero, Joseph Huval, Marie Lee Prioux, Troy Barras, Kelly Ransonet, Jessica Scott, Mary Smith, Brian Thibodeaux, Jackie Savoy, Barry Thibodeaux, Doris “Boutte” Barras, Michele Dugas Burke, Paul Crochet, Craig Breaux, Helen Simon, Ross Rouly, Jamie Brady, Holly LeBlanc, Faye Gary, Tony Berard, Glenn Romero, Stuart Sandoz, Duffy Domingue, Eric Clements, David Louviere, Hayden Ransonet, Trevor Louviere, Vanessa Courville, Wayne Louviere, Austin Willett, Willey Poirrier, Inez Barras, Helen Bastian, Butch and Debbie White, Guy

Thibodeaux, Lydia May, Louis “CoCo” Landry Jr, Jerry Fruge, Jimmy Clifton, Rowena Borel, Megan Scully, Maxine Latiolais, Dawn Derouen, Falyn Sonnier, Rickey Sonnier, Caline Provost, Patricia Freyou, Lecia Broussard, Jason Walker, Michael Theriot, Roshondra Nora, Noah Abraham, Jimmy LeBlanc, Chad Borel, Sophie Bonin, Ashley Hebert, Stephen Dugas, Bonnie Hebert, Jon-Luke Lancon, Jade Delcambre, Doris Prados, Gail Louviere, Pat Villermin., Ira Bourque, Hailey Thomassee, Lon Prioux.

Please note that our office will purge the names on our sick list every quarter. We ask anyone who lists someone's name to please call the parish office to add or remove a name.

Instructions with Regard to Mass Attendance

This week we are blessed with our return to church for the celebration of Mass. This temporary Sunday Mass schedule is subject to change with regard to civil authorities. The temporary Sunday Mass schedule is as follows:

- Saturday - 4:00 p.m. — Last names beginning with A - G only
- Sunday - 8:00 a.m. — Last names beginning with H - N only
- Sunday - 10:00 a.m. — Last names beginning with O - Z only

Division by last name is due to state Fire Marshall regulations which impose a 25% occupancy limit for our buildings.

All Masses will be livestreamed on YouTube at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCB5E10COR9_ITotQhZ7MtrQ

The Ushers will be seating everyone according to the instructions that they have been given by the bishop. Entrance into the church is by the front center doors only. Please cooperate with the Ushers as only the pews marked with blue tape will be used. Phase I Reopening requires a limit of 25% occupancy of our buildings. Please help us in this endeavor.

At the end of Mass the Ushers will be dismissing everyone in an orderly manner using all doors to prevent crowding. Please be patient and cooperate with them by following their instructions.

Persons who are ill (fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, loss of taste/smell etc.) as well as those with preexisting conditions should not attend Mass. Also, persons over 65 years old are at a higher risk of experiencing worse symptoms than others if they contract the coronavirus virus and should consider not attending Mass.

All Catholics in the Diocese of Lafayette remain dispensed from their obligation from attending Sunday Masses. You may fulfill your spiritual duty on any day of the week.

State regulations require that persons in public gatherings are required to wear masks or face coverings. Please bring your own pocket/purse supply of hand sanitizer.

The Priest and deacon will function as Eucharistic Ministers until further notice. They will also fulfill the other ministries as well.

For the distribution of Holy Communion, the priest and deacon will go out to the people. **Please do not leave your pew.**

As governmental guidelines change these guidelines will be changed.

The Weekday Mass schedule has been changed. Please make note:

- Monday, Friday - 6:45 a.m. at Our Lady of Victory
- Wednesday - 6:45 a.m. at Saint Joseph
- Tuesday, Thursday - 5:30 p.m. at Saint Joseph
- Weekday Livestream Mass on YouTube - 10:00 a.m.

Please pray for our priests, seminarians, deacons and religious

Eternal Father, we lift up to You these special sons and daughters. Sanctify them. Heal and guide them. Mold them into the likeness of Your Son, Jesus, the Eternal High Priest. May their lives be pleasing to You. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

May 17	Rev. Louis McCabe, SJ/Alex Lancon Dcn. Francis Cao/Sr. Suzanne Lasseigne, RSCJ
May 18	Rev. Richard McGowan, SJ/Cole Laurents Dcn. David Chambers/Sr. Elizabeth Renard, RSCJ
May 19	Rev. Garrett McIntyre/Jacob LeBlanc Dcn. Ron Chauvin/Sr. Mary Ellen Theriot, SSND
May 20	Rev. Bert Mead, SJ/Bret Lee Dcn. Jerome Collins/Sr. Mildred Leonards, CDP
May 21	Rev. Glenn Meaux, SOLT/Calvin LeMaire Dcn. Gary Gaudin/Sr. Joan Marie Alexander, SSF
May 22	Rev. Aaron Melancon/Seth Lemaire Dcn. Frank Cormier/Sr. Rachel Williams, SSF
May 23	Rev. Bill John Melancon/Joseph Marcantel Dcn. Mike Crain/Sr. Rita Darensbourg, SSF

Mass Intentions — 5/16-5/22

Saturday 4:00 p.m. — Ken Segura, Andrew “Toupee” Bonin, Katie Boutte, Walter and Doris M. Judice, Gerald Vaughn, Glenn Clifton, Francis and Lorena Dupoy and Patrick Lasseigne, Butsy Walet, Walet Family, Dr. Harold Heitcamp, Gloria and Sam Delcambre and Family, Terrel Dressel, Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Aymar “Poon” and Beulah Dugas, Ide Dugas Family, Alexis Laviolette Family, Wayne LeBlanc, Lily Mae and Alvin LeBlanc, Otto Sr. and Laurence Girouard, Terradot Family, Theresa Girouard Allen, Clarence Champagne Family, Robert Prados Family and Breaux Family, Chad Romero, Deyna Champagne, Audrey Crochet, Jordan Prince and Special Intention, Joseph Dressel, Barry Eldridge and Ned Broussard Families, Melvin Dugas, Roy Sr. and Gladys Berard, Forbus and Myrtle Mestayer Sr., Granger and Mestayer Family, Ronald, Sr. and Mildred Gonsoulin, Leed and Mabel Gondron, Fred Laviolette, Louis and Grace Moran, Virginia Frioux, Lennet and Marie Antoinette Crochet, Clenie and Eve Segura and Billie, Sally Domingue, Cabrol and Domingue Family, Martha Escagne Rodriguez, Lloyd Broussard, Claude and Felicie Granger, Nancy Broussard, Clarence and Hilda Landry, Billie and Armance Barilleaux, Kay Dooley and William and Dolores Dooley, Earl Mestayer, Kim Decuir, Chris and Annie Decuir Family, Benjamin Decuir Family, Ron and Jana Angelle Family, Michael Decuir Family, Ossie Romero, Jr., Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet.

Sunday 8:00 a.m. — S.J. “Bute” Granger and Junius and Mary Hebert, Catherine Defelice and Tracey Defelice Guilbeau, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, John Michael Steiner, Jay Gonsoulin Family, Paul Sonnier Family and Clyde Warfel Family, Loto and Leah Louviere, Antoine “Boy” LeBlanc Family, Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Albert Sr., Champagne and Landry Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Maude Granger, Benny and Glo Granger, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Granger, Dr. Raymond Schneider, Elaine Schneider, Skip Schneider, Lolly Harbin, Breaux and Delcambre Families, Lenwood Delcambre, Emus Borel, Gwen Borel, Chataignier Family, Joe and Rita Habetz, Mary Kay Habetz, Tom Voorhies, Oris Cormier, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron,

Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet.
10:00 a.m. — Philip, Jr. and Neil Hebert, Theresa and Daniel Latiolais, Sr., Gus & Lydia Broggi, Beau Broussard, Suzette Judice, Antoine and Marie Judice Family, Butsy Walet, Shelton Joseph and Ella Mae Desormeaux Freyrou, Alvin and Faye Tauzin, Edmonia Tauzin, Marcel and Nadage Broussard, Jimmy Eldridge, Elaine Plessala and Eldridge Family, Cheryl Segura, Pliny Walet Family, Agnes Breaux, Louis and Elbay Judice, Boots Thomas, Joe Boudreaux and Justin Boudreaux, Katie Boutte, Sandra Angelle and Glenn Angelle, Percy Granger, Alvaro Jimenez, Robert Lawrence, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet.

Monday 6:45 a.m. OLV — Allen Borres, Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet.

Tuesday 5:30 p.m. Stjo — John Michael Steiner, Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet.

Wednesday 6:45 a.m. Stjo — John Michael Steiner, Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet.

Thursday 5:30 p.m. Stjo — Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet.

Friday 6:45 a.m. OLV — Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory, Pope, Priest, Religious, Judice and Walet Families, Protection from and end to Corona Virus, Ruben Rogers, Elizabeth Capps Rogers, Wayne Rogers, Alfred Crochet, Claude Hebert, Cecile Hebert, Deacon Jay Bergeron, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Sue Crochet.

The Sanctuary Lamp is burning for:

The Community.

The Vocation Chalice is in Church

Please pray for vocations. If you would like to have the vocation chalice in your home please call the rectory office at 229-4254

The Bi-Monthly Statue is in the home of

Donald and Sharon Solar

The Weekly Statue is in the home of

Carolyn Walet

Saint Joseph Altar Candles are burning for

Patrick and Bridget Riley, Good Health, Safe Travel, Prosper Business
 Mr. and Mrs. Levie Ronsonet and Family, Delcambre and Breaux Families
 Chad Romero and Deyna Champagne, Charles and Jackie Poirrier Family
 Landry and Champagne Families Ancestors and Descendants and Souls in Purgatory
 Pope, Priest, Religious, Protection from and end to Corona Virus.

The Soul of Pope Saint John Paul II by George Weigel

[On the occasion of the 100th Birthday of Pope Saint John Paul II on Monday, May 18, we offer this document from the papal biographer George Weigel.]

Shortly after the death of Pope John Paul II on April 2, 2005, Henry Kissinger told NBC News that it would be difficult to imagine anyone having had a greater impact on the Twentieth Century than the Polish priest and bishop who, on the night of his election in 1978, had described himself as a man called to Rome “from a far country.” Kissinger’s assessment was all the more striking in that the former U.S. secretary of state — himself a consequential figure in modern history — had no religious or philosophical stake in the life, thought, and action of Karol Józef Wojtyła. A decade and a half later, it is still worth pondering just what Kissinger’s extraordinary tribute might mean. If John Paul II was indeed the emblematic human personality of the twentieth century, why was that the case? And what was the relationship between the achievement of the Polish pope — for both the Church and the world — and the heroic virtue the Catholic Church formally recognized in him when he was canonized as Saint John Paul II on April 27, 2014?

In a conversation in the papal apartment in March 1996, John Paul II said, of previous biographers’ efforts to tell his life story, “They try to understand me from outside. But I can only be understood from inside.” He knew by then that he was a figure of historical consequence. Yet his story, he insisted, was one that could only be read from the inside out through the prism of his soul, if those who sought to understand him and his accomplishment were to truly grasp what made him tick. So on this Twentieth Anniversary of the publication of **Witness to Hope**, revisiting the soul of Saint John Paul II will set the story of his life through the year 2000 in its appropriate frame.

Karol Wojtyła, the man who became John Paul II, had an intensely Polish soul: not only in the sense of a personality formed by a particular ethnic experience, but in the larger sense of a soul formed by a distinctive history and culture. Born in 1920, he was a member of the first generation of Poles born in an independent Polish state since the late eighteenth century; but it was the Polish national experience between the elimination of Poland from the map of Europe in 1795 and the restoration of its national independence in 1918 that was decisive for forming the soul of John Paul II. For during those 123 years in the wilderness — years when “Poland” did not appear on any map of Europe — Poland-the-nation survived the vivisection of Poland-the-state through its culture: its language, its literature, and its Catholic faith.

That century and a quarter of culturally-based national resistance to political subjugation, during which the Catholic Church was the safe deposit box of Polish identity, left a profound impression on Wojtyła’s soul, and was decisive in shaping the thought and action of John Paul II. From that experience, he discerned that the real driver of history over time is neither politics nor economics, but culture: and at the heart of any culture, as at the beginning of the word “culture,” is cult: what a people cherishes and worships. Thus far from being a non-factor in modernity, religious conviction, and the truths Christianity teaches about the inalienable dignity of

every human life, can be a dynamic, creative force, bending history in a more humane direction. When Wojtyła was elected pope on October 16, 1978, much of the Catholic Church in the West found itself in a defensive crouch. The man who became John Paul II could summon the Church to a new evangelical and public dynamism because his soul had been formed by a different experience: an experience of the Church as the bearer of the most potent vision of human possibility on offer.

Karol Wojtyła also had a Carmelite soul. His youthful attempts to enter monastic life as a Carmelite had been rebuffed, but his spiritual life — and indeed his entire view of the human condition — was profoundly shaped by his encounter as a young man with the spiritual writings of the classic Carmelite reformers of the sixteenth century, Saint John of the Cross and Saint Teresa of Avila. From those Carmelite mystics, he learned that the central truth of human history is found at the Cross of Christ: human beings come to fulfillment (or, if you will, beatitude), not through the assertion of self but through the gift of self in obedience to God’s Will. In his mature philosophical work at the Catholic University of Lublin, Wojtyła would refine this conviction intellectually and would put the “Law of the Gift,” or the law-of-self-giving, at the very foundation of his ethics — as each of our lives is a gift to us, so we must make our lives into gifts for others. That refinement was only possible, however, because of the original perception. Rather than being a hideous cruelty or an absurdity, the self-sacrificing death of Jesus Christ — which was then vindicated by His Resurrection from the dead into a new and superabundant form of life — is the axial point of human history. Here, in the Death and Resurrection of Christ, the deepest truths about human destiny were and are revealed. Here, in the embrace of obedience to God’s Will, human beings are truly liberated. Here, in the demonstration that death does not have the final word in either our individual stories or in the story of humanity, is the source of a courage than can overcome fear and match, even conquer, worldly power.

The Carmelite dimension of John Paul’s richly textured soul was amplified by what might be called the Marian dimension of his interior life: that deep part of his personality formed by his self-understanding as a spiritual son of the Virgin Mary, under whose protection he placed his life and his pontificate. Polish devotion to the Virgin Mary, embodied in the Black Madonna of Częstochowa, is well-known. This Marian dimension of Wojtyła’s soul was not, however, simply the absorption of a traditional, emotionally vibrant form of Polish piety. For during the Second World War, under the influence of the lay mystic Jan Tyranowski and the theological writings of Saint Louis Grignon de Montfort, young Karol Wojtyła began to understand that all true Christian devotion to Mary is Christocentric and Trinitarian: Mary’s role in the history of salvation is not as some sort of independent, feminine “principle” but as the first witness to Christ, Her Son — “Do whatever *He* tells you,” as She instructs the waiters at the wedding feast in Cana in the second chapter of John’s gospel. Mary always points to Her Son, and because Jesus is both Son of Mary and Son of God, by pointing us to Her Son Mary points us into the great Mystery of the Trinity, the God Who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

During his pontificate, John Paul II would draw on this Marian dimension of his soul to deepen Catholicism’s traditional Marian piety, constantly

pointing to Mary as the paradigm of all Christian discipleship. Mary’s articulated “yes” to the angelic invitation to be the God-bearer (Luke 1.38) sets the pattern; Mary’s silent “yes” at the foot of the Cross, memorably captured in Michelangelo’s *Pietà*, confirms that obedience to God’s Will, even in the most profound suffering, is ultimately liberating.

And here, as in his cruciform or Carmelite soul, John Paul II lived a profound challenge to the late-modern and post-modern insistence that radical personal autonomy is the royal road to happiness and human flourishing.

Then there was the dramatic dimension of Karol Wojtyła’s soul. As a young man “obsessed” (as he once put it) with the theater, Wojtyła acquired skills that would serve him well as a public personality, both as archbishop of Kraków and as pope. More importantly, however, his theatrical experience as both actor and playwright formed a soul with a distinctive view of the human condition. Each of us, he came to understand, lives in a dramatic situation, for we live each day in the gap between the person-I-am and the person-I-ought-to-be. Understanding that, we come to grasp that life is never dull or repetitive; living in such a way as to close the gap between who I am now and what I aspire to be is inherently dramatic, adventurous, and dynamic. What we sometimes call “the human drama” is not just the story of those large-scale figures who dominate the history books. The “human drama” is in fact the spiritual and moral life of every human person. And the task of the Church and its ministers, Pope John Paul II would insist, is to accompany men and women in the drama of their lives, exploring each life’s uniquely dramatic circumstances while offering the mercy and forgiveness of Christ when the drama takes a bad turn.

This conviction that all of life is dramatically structured, and that the ultimate playwright of the human drama is none other than God, helps explain the otherwise inexplicable magnetism that John Paul II had for young people all over the world. At a cultural moment when pandering to the young was the order of the day, John Paul II did not pander: he challenged. But because he also made clear that he, too, lived in that dramatic “gap” that is everyone’s human circumstance, his challenge had the ring of authenticity. He was not asking young people to accept any challenge he had not accepted, take any risk he had not taken, or bear any burden he had not borne; he was, instead, asking them to pursue, with courage, the instinct for the heroic and the noble that was their human birthright, even in a world of sin and evil. Never, ever settle, he would say in many variations on a common theme, for anything less than the spiritual and moral greatness that the grace of God makes possible in your life. And when you fail — as we all do — don’t lower the bar of expectation. Get up, seek forgiveness, be reconciled to God and others, and then continue the great dramatic adventure of “life in the gap.” Live in those terms, he suggested, and you will never, ever find life anything other than exhilarating, no matter how hard it becomes.

The priestly soul of John Paul II, and his understanding of priestly ministry as the clarifying, challenging, and grace-bestowing accompaniment of others through the drama of life, has been noted; Karol Wojtyła also had what can be accurately described as a “lay” soul. He was the first pope in centuries who, until he was a young adult, had intended to live out his Catholic life as a layman. Two

decades before the Second Vatican Council taught the Church about the universal call to holiness, Wojtyła already knew (not least from his father, the dominant influence on his young life) that sanctity was not a matter for the church sanctuary only; sanctity was every Christian's baptismal vocation, and sanctity was to be sought and lived in the world, not in an ecclesiastical bunker. Thus, for John Paul II, Catholicism could not be understood as a life-style or recreational choice to be indulged for an hour or so on Sunday and then put aside in order to return to the "real world;" rather, Catholic faith embraced and illuminated all of life, and everything the believer does (be it in the family, the workplace, as a consumer, or as a citizen) is to be sanctified by Catholic lives and by God's grace working through those lives. Thus John Paul II, who loved the gift of his priesthood and inspired priestly vocations in tens of thousands of young men, was concurrently the least clerical of high ecclesiastics, for he knew and lived his priestly vocation as a servant of the sanctity, happiness, and ultimately beatitude of others.

Finally, there was what might be called the "humanistic" layer of Karol Wojtyła's soul: that deep part "inside" him that was formed by his experience of what he believed to be the great crisis of his time — the crisis in the very idea of the human person. That ideas have consequences was more than a philosopher's slogan for Wojtyła; he knew the truth of that maxim in his bones, as he had experienced it both in the Second World War and in the communist usurpation of Poland's post-war liberties. But if wicked ideas could be death-dealing in their consequences, a proper idea of the dignity and value of every human life — the idea that anti-communist dissidents in the 1980s would call "living in the truth" — could be liberating: first, in individual lives shaped by aroused consciences; later, in great public movements of cultural, social, and political renewal.

And the great role of the Church in the late-modern and post-modern worlds, he believed, was to rescue the idea of the human person from the doldrums (and worse) into which it had fallen. The "Twentieth Century" as a historical epoch rather than a calendrical calculation — the years between onset of World War I in 1914 and the collapse of European communism in 1989-1991 — had torn the moral fabric of humanity, leaving profound cultural and spiritual scars. In the face of that undeniable reality, the Church's task was to insist, in and out of season, that a different way was possible; that humanity did not have to live in despair, caught in traps and blind alleys of its own making; that the great aspirations of modernity to freedom and dignity could be realized and lived nobly if men and women rediscovered Jesus Christ as the answer to the question that is every human life — if the men and women of the Third Millennium could see in the face of Christ, crucified and risen, the deepest truth of their humanity. To display that face was the Mission of the Church, and the Mission of the Church's most visible witness, the successor of Saint Peter as Bishop of Rome.

At the centenary of his birth, it is clear that the pivotal period in Karol Wojtyła's life — the period when this multilayered soul began to take its mature form — was the Second World War. The Polish experience of that civilizational cataclysm was striking for its harshness. Life in either those parts of Poland absorbed into Hitler's Third Reich or those under Nazi Occupation was akin to life under constant, intense, fiery pressure: rather like what happens, constantly, beneath the visible crust of the Earth.

Those massive geological forces at work below the visible layers of our planet can burst forth in violent and destructive ways: they cause earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis. But under those same pressures something else forms: diamonds, the hardest, clearest substance known to our science.

The pressures of the Second World War — the relentless degradation, the back-breaking physical work, the death of friends and relatives, the brutalization of every aspect of life — formed a kind of diamond out of Karol Wojtyła. And as diamonds both cut through the seemingly impermeable even as they reflect light in a dazzling way, Wojtyła found it possible to cut through political realities that seemed intractable, while focusing light into what often seemed the darkest corners of the human condition.

On John Paul II's election in 1978, knowledgeable analysts of world affairs (including the mandarins in the Vatican's foreign ministry) believed that the division of Europe embodied by the Berlin Wall was a permanent feature of the international scene. Europe, and indeed the world, was divided into two ideologically opposed and hostile camps, and the best that could be done was to try to ameliorate tensions between the two in the hope that, over decades (if not centuries) they might come to some sort of convergence. That was just the way things were, and the ways things would be; prudent leaders accommodated themselves to that reality.

John Paul II held a different view. He refused to submit to the tyranny of the way things are. And because of that, he could ignite a revolution of conscience throughout central and eastern Europe that would eventually cut through the seemingly permanent and impermeable Berlin Wall. His pivotal role in the collapse of European communism has been recognized by historians of the Cold War, but that facet of his papal accomplishment was not the only way in which he demonstrated his faith-driven capacity to take the course of history in an unexpected but better direction. He did the same for his Church.

Catholicism in October 1978 was reeling from two decades of internal strife over the proper interpretation of the Second Vatican Council, which met from 1962 through 1965. By giving the Council an authoritative interpretation over the twenty-six and a half years of his pontificate, John Paul II (who as a young bishop had played an important role at the Council) inspired the living parts of the Catholic Church in the late-Twentieth and early-Twenty-first Centuries to take up again the mission that Pope John XXIII had envisioned in summoning Vatican II: the mission of converting the world while putting the great human aspiration to freedom on a firmer spiritual and moral foundation. John Paul II's interpretation of the Council through his papal magisterium — the extensive body of teaching that includes his encyclicals, apostolic letters, apostolic exhortations, and other writings — was contested in his time and remains contested a decade and a half after his death. What is not contestable is that the parts of the Catholic Church that are living, vibrant, evangelically dynamic, and culturally consequential in the early Twenty-first Century are those that have embraced John Paul II's interpretation of Vatican II's purpose and teaching, while the moribund parts of the world Church are those that were in opposition to John Paul II during his life and remain so today.

If the first half of the drama that was the epic pontificate of John Paul II found its center of gravity in his crucial role in what history now knows as the

Revolution of 1989 in central and eastern Europe, the second half of the drama found its focus in what the Pope came to call "the New Evangelization:" the revolutionary transformation of the Church from a Catholicism of institutional maintenance to a Church of missionary discipleship and evangelism.

In its Third Millennium, John Paul II insisted, the Catholic Church must once again become the missionary enterprise it was at its very beginnings. And in that sense, the single most insightful line ever written about Karol Wojtyła remains that of Andre Frossard, a French journalist. After hearing the newly elected John Paul II preach a powerful sermon at his inaugural Mass on October 22, 1978, summoning the Church to a new fearlessness and challenging the world to open its doors to Christ, and after sensing the evangelical energy John Paul had ignited in a vast crowd in Saint Peter's Square, Frossard wrote this for his Paris-based newspaper: "This is not a pope from Poland. This is a pope from Galilee."

John Paul II believed that every generation of Christians is given the same Great Commission that was given to the first Christian disciples: "Go ... and make disciples of all nations ..." (Matthew 28.19). And in offering all nations the possibility of friendship with Jesus Christ and incorporation into the community of Christ's friends that is the Church, Twenty-first Century Catholicism would also be offering the world a path beyond the cultural and political dead-ends that had turned the Twentieth Century into the greatest slaughterhouse in human history. For under the leadership of John Paul II, the Catholic Church developed a social doctrine — a way of thinking about late-modern and post-modern cultural, social, political, and economic life — that offered an alternative to the two great dangers that bestrode the first decades of the Third Millennium: humanity's temptation to self-absorption in the sandbox of radical personal autonomy, and the related temptation to find the answer to the innate human longing for community and solidarity in new forms of authoritarianism.

Karol Wojtyła brought to the papacy an exceptional package of personal gifts and talents, which had been honed by decades of intellectual and pastoral work. His unshakeable faith in the divine direction of his life led him to deploy those skills in ways that renewed the Catholic Church's self-understanding, made the Church a pivotal player on the world stage in a host of venues, and set the evangelical course of Catholic life and mission in the Third Millennium of Christian history. All of that can be gratefully acknowledged. Yet we do not grasp John Paul II "from inside" unless we begin from the understanding that this most consequential of popes in hundreds of years was first and foremost a radically converted Christian disciple. Everything in his mature life and his papacy proceeded from that.

And that was the deepest source of his capacity to inspire others to lead lives of heroic virtue in imitation of Jesus Christ — and thereby to bend history in a more human direction.

A donation was made to the Flower Fund in loving memory of Allen Borres.