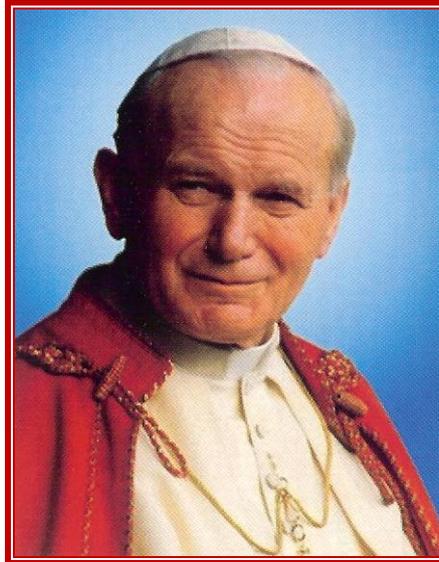


## A Christian Witnesses in the Modern World



**Pope St. John Paul II's**

## A Tribute to Pope St. John Paul II

### **1. Funeral of Pope John Paul II:**



April 8 has been a sad but great day, witnessing to a world-event, funeral of Pope John II. It was **sad day** because millions of people from all over the world were saying in tears good-bye to late Pope John Paul II, who endeared them during his 26 years as the head of the Roman Catholic Church and as a great spiritual leader for whole humanity in our times. But it was **a great day** because the millions, who gathered at the Vatican or watched the Television or listened to the radio, paid their homage and acknowledged his prayer, teachings and labours for peace and reconciliation among peoples and nations. All seem to say that he was someone of whom we can truly be proud of and look up to him for guidance for years to come. The Pope had died on 2<sup>nd</sup> of April, after being seriously ill for over two months.

### **2. A Crowd Puller in Life and Death:**

He was a crowd puller both in life and death. People gathered in lakhs to welcome and listen to him when he visited 102 countries of the world as the Pope. While he was seriously ill and dying, thousands gathered in Vatican to be with him and pray for him. Millions passed by his mortal remains lying in state at Vatican paying him rich tribute from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2005. Nearly 10,000,000 people gathered in and around St. Peters Square and Vatican for his Funeral Mass. "The Hindu" writes: "St. Peter's Square was crammed with over 300,000 people and an estimated 700,000 filled the nearby streets to watch the mass on giant video screens." (April 9, 2005). Over 200 world leaders came to Rome to pay him their last respects. The media called him, "the People's Pope". "Globe Trotting Pope", or "the Pilgrim Pope" because he was on the move to reach out to people everywhere. He was one of the most loved and respected personalities of our age, cutting across the barriers of caste and creed, cultures, languages and nations. The Pope presented himself as a



pilgrim of peace and reconciliation. He tirelessly worked to support the weak and the small against the tyranny of communism or capitalism during the years of his pontificate.

### 3. A Media's Man:

He was always open to the mass-media. Mass-media has been ever attentive to what he said and did. The media gave him unlimited coverage during his papal visits. At his death, The "Hindustan Times" called him "A man who changed the world". The "Hindu" called him "Man of the Century", announced his death, "World mourns Pope's passing" and reported on his funeral as "Millions bid farewell to Pope John Paul II". The "Times of India" wrote, "a global outpouring of grief followed the news of the death of Pope John Paul II at the Vatican". This is equally true of other leading papers in our country and abroad. The BBC and CNN gave a running commentary on his last days, death and funeral. The coverage given to his death proved the fact that during his pontificate he played a very significant role for the good of the humankind and its future.

### 4. Leader Among Leaders:

The world leaders recognized his spiritual leadership and paid him glowing tributes at his death. Cutting across all ideological barriers, leaders across the world came out to express their appreciation of Pope John Paul II.

UN Secretary General, **Kofi Annan** said the Pope was "extremely concerned about the world we lived in, and like me, he also felt that in war, all are losers."

The President of India, **A. P. Abdul Kalam** said, "The world has lost a church leader and a statesman who throughout his life worked for the needy and oppressed. He tirelessly worked for peace on this planet and to establish an international order based on equality and justice." The president, continued, "The pope always spoke in support of India's secular values and traditions of tolerance and religious inclusiveness and encouraged human values, which endeared him to Indians of all faiths."

The United States' President, **George W. Bush** said that Pope John Paul's death is a great loss for all: "The Catholic Church has lost its shepherd, the world has lost a champion of human freedom, and a good and faithful servant of God has been called home."

The Russian President, **Vladimir Putin**, said the Pope's spiritual and political legacy have been deservedly valued by humanity."

Cuba's Communist President, **Fidel Castro** ordered all celebrations to be suspended in his country and described the Pope as a "personality with worldwide reach and an "indefatigable fighter for peace". In his letter to Cardinal Somalo, temporary leader of Catholic Church, until a new pope is elected, he wrote:" Humanity will keep a touching memory of the tireless work of his Holiness Pope John Paul II in favour of peace, justice and solidarity between all peoples."

The Sri Lankan President, **Chandrika Kumarathunga**, in her condolence message, described Pope John Paul II as "a most revered and popular global personality". Recalling with reverence the late Pope's visit to Sri Lanka in 1995, the President said, he "eloquently expressed loving kindness, compassion, sympathy and equanimity, which are abiding values upheld by Christianity as well as the other great religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam practiced in Sri Lanka".

The Prime Minister of India **Manmohan Singh** said "Pope John Paul II was a people's pope. He specially endeared himself to Indians when he granted sainthood to Mother Teresa. He was a great reconciler of religions, a humanist."

The Prime Minister of Great Britain, **Tony Blair** said that the world had lost a leader who was revered by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. He said "The World has lost a religious leader who was revered across by people of all faiths and none".

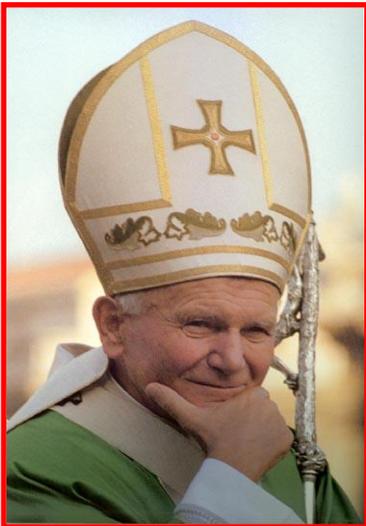
The Israeli Prime Minister, **Ariel Sharon**, called him “a friend of the Jewish people and said that the world had lost one of the most important leaders of our generation”

The former Soviet Union President, **Michael Gorbachev** said, he was “humanitarian number one on the planet”. “There was not a single conflict in the world that escaped his attention.”

### **5. Power of God’s Love when shared:**

Why all this exceptional attention to a man who has been the head of the smallest country in the world, the Vatican State. It was not the earthly power that the people recognized in Pope John Paul II, but the all embracing spiritual power – the power of God’s love. Besides being the spiritual leader of 1.1 billion Catholic Christians in the world, he extended his loving concern crossing the boundaries of religions and nations, to whole humanity. He looked towards the whole humankind, thought for the welfare of all human beings and prayed for all of them as the children of God.

### **6. The Charm of Pope’s Personality:**



There was a charm in his personality. He loved life as God’s precious gift. He was enthusiastic, energetic and humorous. He tried to make the best of his own life, in spite of the adverse situations which he faced in his youth due to the Nazi occupation and the Communist regime that followed in Poland, his home-country. He worked in the stone-quarry as a labourer to escape Nazi captivity. He was a sports-man, poet, dramatist, actor, writer, philosopher, theologian and a convinced spiritual leader. He was a champion for freedom and equality. Therefore he emphasized human dignity and rights. He loved people young and old, irrespective of caste, creed and colour. He promoted friendship and dialogue with religions, cultures and nations. He spoke for a culture of life, reconciliation and hope. Philip McCombs in his article, “People’s Pope” in The Week magazine (April 17, 2005) wrote: “The Pope’s extraordinary outreach was not limited to Catholics. He sought reconciliation with Jews. He reached out to Muslims and Protestants, to Greek Orthodox Churches. He forgave Mohamed Ali Agca, the gunman who shot him in 1981, visiting him in jail.” He did not hesitate to apologize to the world for Church’s mistakes in the past like the persecution of Galileo in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the inquisition or Crusades.

He cautioned against a culture of death. Hence he condemned war, violence, oppression, abortion, capital punishment and the curse of poverty as evils created by man. He pointed out to the dangers faced by the family, the root of human society in the modern times. He disapproved selfishness of man - individual, social or national. He fought against whatever that degrades human dignity, false humanism, materialism, dictatorship of the mighty. He tried to dispel the shadows of despair and expose the hollowness of materialistic hedonism, even when he was criticized as a conservative. He was a prophet for our times.

He was totally devoted to God and to man, as created by God in his own image. He looked at God with love and trust, and man with love and compassion as taught by Jesus Christ, the Lord and Saviour of the human race. Therefore love of God and man was his life-style and clarion call.

### **7. Endearing India:**

Pope John Paul II visited India twice, in 1986 and 1999. During his first visit he beatified Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara and blessed Alphonsa Muttathupadath, both hailing from Kerala. He also started the process of canonization of about half-a-dozen Indians including Mother Teresa

John Paul’s first papal visit to the country was from February 1-10, 1986, as a “Pilgrimage of Peace”. To everyone’s pleasant surprise, as he came down the Al-Italia plane, he knelt down and kissed the Indian soil, paying his respect for this ancient land. Then he met the President, Zail Singh and the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. His first stopover was at the ‘Samadhi’ of Mahatma Gandhi, where he was lost in prayer. He visited 14 important Christian Centres in India: Delhi, Ranchi, Shillong, Calcutta, Madras, Goa, Mangalore, Cochin, Trichur, Kottayam, Trivandrum, Vasai, Pune and Bombay. It was at Kottayam in Kerala that he

beatified Blessed Kuriakose Elias and Blessed Alphonsa. And everywhere he received warm welcome from vast enthusiastic crowds, irrespective of Caste and Creed. The Pope also acknowledged the ancient roots of Christianity in India by recognizing the Syrian Catholic Church in India as autonomous.

After the Youth Rally at Shivaji Park, Bombay, at the end of his first visit to India, these were his parting words, “Many years ago, it was a pilgrimage in my imagination; a pilgrimage in response to the question, “What is India?” ....When I follow the works and writings of Mahatma Gandhi I find answers to me and Christians everywhere – useful answers in the field of human dignity, human self-control ... and when I read your great Rabindranath Tagore... I find from what I see ... meeting you, seeing how you dance, how you sing; what heritage of deep culture you have within yourself, in your soul and in your body. All that is a long heritage. That is my pilgrimage to India. And now it is accomplished. And I thank God I had the opportunity to be with you. And with you my pilgrimage comes to an end.” (The Forteen Stations, The official Souvenir of the Visit of Pope John Paul II to India. February 1 to 10, Published by the National Media Committee –Papal Visit to India, Archbishop’s House, 21, Nathal parek Marg, Bombay 400 039, p. 100)

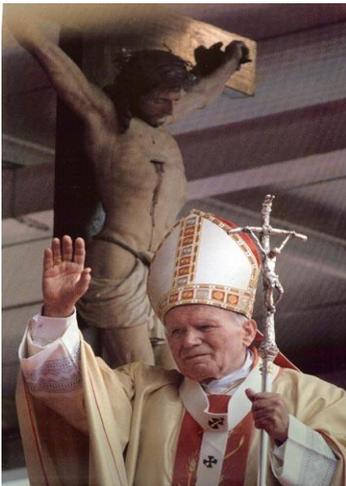
At a General Audience later on Feb.26, 1986, the Holy Father expressed his impressions about his visit to India in this way: “This Pilgrimage included a great variety of experiences. It provided an opportunity to come to know and appreciate better the history and culture of India. The Indian heritage is above all, religious, moral and cultural. It recognizes the need for moral values and the primacy of the spirit in human life.....The Church in India is marked by diversity, zeal and vitality. Being a small minority in a vast country, ... the Church’s apostolic and social activities far exceed what might be expected from such a small percentage of the population. The vast network of schools, hospitals and other institutions makes a major contribution to the education and welfare of people.

.....The great joy of this pilgrimage will remain ever alive in my mind and heart. It is a source of gratitude and praise to God” (The Fourteen Stations, p.1)

The Pope’s second visit to India was in November 1999 when he came to Delhi to release the document of the Asian Synod of Bishops, the “Ecclesia in Asia”(The Church in Asia). The NDA government headed by Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee honoured him as a State guest. The Pope was also attached to India because of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, whose life and dedication to the poorest of the poor was highly appreciated by the Pope.

## 8. His Life’s Journey:

Karol Jozef Wojtyla, later Pope John Paul II, was born in Wadowice, Poland as the son of a retired army officer and a school teacher. After his high school studies he enrolled in the Faculty of Philosophy at Jagellonian University in 1938 and in a school for drama.



When the Nazis invaded Poland in September 1939, he worked as a stone cutter and in the Solvay chemical factory to avoid being deported to Germany. In October 1942, he began to study for the priesthood secretly in Krakow’s underground seminary. By the time he was 36 he had two doctorate degrees and was an ethic professor. He was ordained a priest on November 1<sup>st</sup> 1946. He was installed as the archbishop of Krakow on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1964. He was consecrated as a Cardinal by Pope Paul VI on June 28<sup>th</sup> 1967. He was elected as the successor of Pope John Paul I on October 16<sup>th</sup> 1978, the first Polish Pope and the first non-Italian in 455 years. He visited Poland for the first time as Pope on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1979, igniting the Polish freedom movement by the establishment of Solidarity, the first independent labour movement in the Soviet bloc.

On May 13<sup>th</sup> 1981 at St. Peter’s square Pope John Paul II was shot at by a young Turk named Mohmed Ali Agca. The Pope was hospitalized for 20 days.

In 1986 he became the first pope to visit a Jewish synagogue. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1989 he received Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev at the Vatican in the first-ever meeting between a Pope and a Russian President. On March 25, 1995, he issued the encyclical “Gospel of Life”, and condemned spreading “the culture of death” including abortion, euthanasia and experimentation on human embryo.

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999 he gave permission to start the cause of beatification for Mother Teresa.

From March 20-26<sup>th</sup> 2000 he made his first pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In a note left at Jerusalem’s Western Wall, he expressed sorrow for suffering of Jews at the hands of Christians.

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2001 he became the first pope to enter a mosque when he toured a 1,300 years-old Islamic house of worship in Damascus, Syria.

From June 5-9, 2003 he made 100<sup>th</sup> foreign trip, visiting Croatia.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005 pope John Paul II died at the age of 84 at his Vatican apartment.  
(cf. The Week, April 17, 2005)

Cardinal Sodano, the Vatican Secretary of State, described the last days of Pope John Paul II on earth as serene: “I was a witness to this serenity as I stood praying by the agonizing pope’s bedside. Serenity is the fruit of faith.”

## **9. Prophetic Words of Pope John Paul II:**

### ***On Justice, Peace and Human Rights***

“Extreme Poverty is perhaps the most pervasive and paralyzing violation of human rights in our world”

“Social justice cannot be attained by violence. Violence kills what it intends to create”.

“Every act which belittles man’s dignity and frustrates his potentials for fulfilling himself is an act contrary to God’s plan for man and for all creation.”

“A Nation which kills its own children has no future”

“The cemetery of the victims of human cruelty in our century is extended to include yet another vast cemetery, that of the unborn”.

“Once again through myself, the Church, in the words of the well known declaration *Nostra Aetate*, ‘deplores the hatred, persecutions and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews at any time and by anyone’. I repeat, ‘By anyone’.

### ***On Inter Religious Understanding:***

“Dialogue between members of different religions increases and deepens mutual respect and paves the way for relationships that are crucial in solving the problems of human suffering. Dialogue that is respectful and open to the opinions of others can promote union and a commitment to this noble cause.” (No. 17.4, p.85)

“As followers of different religions, we should join together in promoting and defending common ideals in the spheres of religious liberty, human brotherhood, education, culture, social welfare and civic order. Dialogue and collaboration are possible in all these great projects”. (No. 17.5, p.86)

“The Catholic Church recognizes the truths that are contained in the religious traditions of India. This recognition makes true dialogue possible...The Church’s approach to other religions is one of genuine respect: with them she seeks mutual collaboration...It is a sign of hope that the religions of the world are becoming more aware of their shared responsibility for the well being of the human family”. (No.17.2, p.83)

Dialogue among Religions is a way to God, he said: It is a “union between people and union of people with God. By dialogue, we let God be present in our midst; for as we open ourselves in dialogue to one another, we open ourselves to God”.

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As criteria for Dialogue, he said “It is essential to pass from antagonism and conflict to a situation where each party recognizes the other as partner and that when undertaking dialogue each side must pre-suppose in the other, a desire for reconciliation, for unity in truth.”

### ***On Christian Unity:***

“Although unity is a gift which we human beings could never achieve on our own, nonetheless we have a duty to seek it and to work for it. ....And the task of restoring unity among all who believe in Christ becomes ever more urgent. The past and the present divisions are a scandal to non-Christians, a glaring contradiction of the will of Christ, a serious obstacle to the Church’s efforts to proclaim the Gospel” (The Pope Speaks to India, No. 21. 5, p.99)

“The work of ecumenism demands our constant efforts and fervent prayers. It begins with the recognition of that primary unity which already exists because of Baptism, a unity which truly binds the baptized to one another and gives them a common share in the life of the Most Holy Trinity, a unity that perpetually persists notwithstanding whatever differences or divisions have arisen.” (21.6, p.99)

### ***On Sharing the Good News:***

“The mission of Christ the Redeemer, which is entrusted to the Church, is still very far from completion. As the second Millennium after Christ’s coming draws to an end, an overall view of the human race shows that this mission is still only beginning and that we must commit ourselves whole-heartedly to its service. It is the Spirit who impels us to proclaim the great works of God: ‘For if I preach the Gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel’.”

(Redemptoris Missio Art. 1)

“Today every Christian is asked to dedicate himself, each in his own state of life, to the important work of evangelization” .

(General Audience, April, 26, 1995)

“Gratitude and joy at the incomparable dignity of man impel us to share this message with everyone: “that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us (1 Jn 1:3). We need to bring the Gospel of life to the heart of every man and woman and to make it penetrate every part of society”.

(Evangelium Vitae, No.80)

“Although the Church gladly acknowledges whatever is true and holy in the religious traditions of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam as a reflection of that truth which enlightens all men, this does not lessen her duty and resolve to proclaim without fail Jesus Christ who is ‘The Way and The Truth and The Life’”.

(Redemptoris Missio, No 55)

“In the proclamation of this Gospel, we must not fear hostility or unpopularity, and we must refuse any compromise or ambiguity which might confirm us to the world’s way of thinking (cr. Rom 12.2). We must be in the world but not of the world (cf. Jn. 17.14), drawing our strength from Christ, who by his Death and Resurrection has over come the world. (cf. Jn. 16.33)

(Redemptoris Missio 55)

### ***On Family:***

“It is the role of the family everywhere and of all society to proclaim that all human life is sacred from the moment of conception. It is the task of all mankind to reject whatever wounds, weakens or destroys human life –whatever offends the dignity of any human being.” (No. 39.6)

“the family is called by the word of the Living God to be a community of peace and fellowship. At the same time, the family calls all individuals and all nations to be such a community”

“The whole of humanity also makes up a family. This is the great family of man, with all its variety.” (39.9)

“For the world is the home of individuals, peoples, nations, humanity. The human race is more numerous than ever before and is achieving scientific and technical progress never before known. Hence, ethical progress, spiritual progress, fully human progress is all the more necessary.” (39.10)

***On International Relations:***

“Violence and arms can never resolve the problems of men”

“War is a defeat for humanity”

“Are children to receive the arms race from us as a necessary inheritance?”

**10. Pope’s Final Message:**

Archbishop Alessandro Aandri, one of Pope’s close aides, read out a final message from the Pope after his death which said, “Love converts hearts and gives peace” Humanity “sometimes seems lost and dominated by the power of evil, selfishness and fear.”

**11. The World has been Blessed:**

The world has been blessed, at the closing of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, to have two path-finders for our life, one in our own country, Mother Theresa of Kolkata and Pope John Paul II, true disciples of Jesus Christ, accepted and acclaimed by the whole world in our times. The characteristic mark of these two great personalities has been their deep devotion to God and man always and everywhere. Come, let us look at life as they did, reach out to people high and low as they did. Let’s love and trust in God as they did and be blessed as they are.

-Compiled by

**Fr. Varghese Nediakalayil SVD**  
(Secretary & Executive Secretary ACECI)

**(Manavtavadi Ishwar Bhakt)**

We, the people of Delhi, vividly recollect the unforgettable image of the Pope preparing to leave the City’s Indira Gandhi Stadium after a cultural programme. “We want to meet the Pope. We want to meet the Pope”, young people were chanting incessantly.

Security men tried to shield him from the excited crowd but the People’s Pope waded into the youth. Scholars right comment that John Paul II reshaped history, rewriting history for millions. According to Grancarlo Zizela, an Italian Vatican expert, “He will be remembered for his great favouring of dialoue between different religions, for the culture of peace and courage to speak against war”.

In 1986, he visited a Synagogue in Rome and in Damascus (Syria) he stepped into a mosque in 2001. The most outstanding of the reconciliation moves was towards the Jewish faith. He was the first Pope to visit a Jewish Synagogue and the memorial at Auschwiz to honour victims of the Holocaust. He made historic moves to build bridges with other faiths, often meeting Dalai Lama, and seeking a close relationship with Islam.

The valiant fighter for peace and justice has left for his heavenly abode. Everywhere, he has left his luminous footprints to follow. Regardless of nationality or religion, as guided by him, we all have to strive hard to serve the cause of humanism and peace.

His Contributions: ”– on Pope John Paul II’s watch, USSR collapsed, Berlin Wall came down, Catholic church spread to Asia, Africa” His sayings: quotations

*The Times of India, New Delhi, Monday, April 4, 2005, p.13*

### **The Only Pope to Have Visited India Twice, In Feb '86 & '99 A revolutionary for India**

- by V Thomas /TNN

“John Paul is the only Pope in the history of the Roman Catholic Church to have visited India twice. During his tenure, he took revolutionary decisions such as giving autonomy to Syrian Christians in India. He also started the process of canonization of about half-a-dozen Indians including Mother Teresa.

John Paul’s first papal visit to the country was from February 1-10, 1986. He came to Delhi in an Al-Italia plane and kissed the soil as he stepped down the plane on February 1. Thereafter he met PM Rajiv Gandhi, his wife Sonia and President Zail Singh.

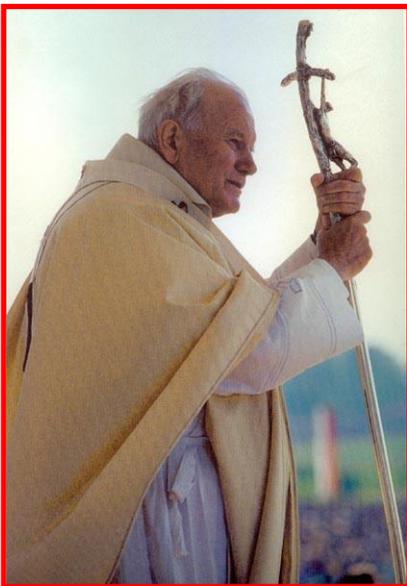
He traveled to many parts of India, including Kolkata, Guwahati, Ranchi, Mangalore, Chennai, Mumbai and Kerala. In Kerala, the Pope got grand welcome similar to what he got in Poland, Europe and Latin America.

The Pop’s second visit to India was in November 1999 when he came to Delhi to inaugurate the Asian Synod of Bishops. The Holy Father wanted to hold the Synod in Hong Kong, but China denied permission. The second choice was Iraq but it was ruled out. When Vatican contacted New Delhi, the NDA government headed by A.B. Vajpayee gave permission and declared it a state visit. The ailing Pope did not kiss the soil of Delhi this time (*Times, April 4, 2005*).

*The Indian Express, New Delhi, Saturday, April 9, 2005:*

### **India’s Pope and a people’s Pope – Shiela Gujral**

Indian Express writes,” Pope John Paul II has left a permanent imprint on my mind ever since he graciously granted an exclusive audience to my husband and me at his summer palace. He had a special soft corner for India because of the honour given to Mother Teresa – both at the official and non-official level in our country. The heads of states of nearly every important country came to pay homage to the departed Saint. Since my husband was the Prime Minister of India at that time, he took meticulous care to give a befitting farewell to her. The gun carriage used for the Father of the Nation – Mahatma Gandhi’s – funeral was put in service for Mother Teresa too.



The Poland-born Pope had a special affinity for our Mother Teresa. He was also a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi. He was often called a ‘Travelling Pope’ since he traveled to 129 countries and impressed people through his eloquent speeches. For us Indians, he was in a way ‘India’s Pope. He visited us twice. His first visit to India was in 1986, when he toured extensively, visiting Delhi, Ranchi, Kolkata, Shillong, Chennai, Goa, Mangalore, Trichur, Ernakulam, Cochin, Kottayam Vijayapuram, Tiruvananthapuram, Mumbai and Pune. His first stopover was the ‘samadhi’ of Mahatiam Gahndhi, where he felt lost in prayer. He had to be virturally shaken up and told by his Secretary that he was praying too long, relates Oswald Gracias, the Archbishop of Agra. During the same visit, when he went to Ranchi, he spoke about the dignity of labour and importance of workers. Everywhere he went after Ranchi, he was received with great enthusiasm. At every venue in south India, there were huge crowds listening to his words of wisdom

The heartening sight of the Pope landing at the Delhi air port on February 1, 1986 and going down on his knees, indeed is unforgettable. We, the people of Delhi, vividly recollect the unforgettable image of the Pope preparing to leave the City’s Indira Gandhi stadium after a cultural programme. “We want to meet the Pope. We want to meet the Pope”, young people were chanting incessantly.

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The valiant fighter for peace and justice has left for his heavenly abode. Everywhere, he has left his luminous footprints to follow. Regardless of nationality or religion, as guided by him, we all have to strive hard to serve the cause of humanism and peace.

### Hindu, Monday April 4, 2005

Hindu published 9 big colour pictures related to acknowledge of the relevance and importance of Pope John Paul II to the modern world.

1. The body of the Pope John Paul II lies at sala Clementina in the Vatocam pm Sunday 4 columns width and more than half a page long, p.1)
2. Late Pope John II's Photo placed in front of the alter at the Cathedral Church In New Delhi. ( 3 Column medium size, p. 1)
3. Popes photo placed at the entrance of the Cathedral, N. Delhi.(3 Columns medium size, p. 3)
4. Popes picture in front of the alter at Raipur St. Joseph's Cathedral, 4 Column, large size, p. 5)
5. Faithful praying and paying respect to late Pope John Paul II at Seva Sadan Church, Bhopal, 3 Column large size, p.5)
6. Sr. Nirmala, Superior General of Missionaries of Charity praying in front of a
7. picture of Pope John Paul II with Blessed Theresa of Calcutta (4 column, half the page size, p. 12
8. Crowds at St. Peter's Square, Rome to attend the Mass for the repose of the soul of Pope John Paul II, celebrated by the Vatican secretary of State, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, 5 column size, large, p. 22
9. Pope John Paul II with Mother Theresa at Vatican in May 20, 1997 file photo, 3 column large size on p. 22)
10. A pilgrim praying at the Church of Nativity, Bethlehem, 4 column, medium size, p. 22

### **There were also:**

#### **1. World mourns Pope's passing**

Overwhelming response: "over a hundred thousand people gathered at Saint Peter's Square in the Vatican to attend a special mass on Sunday in memory of Pope John Paul II who died in his apartments at 9.37 p.m. on Saturday.

The world's 1.1 billion Catholics mourned the departed pontiff, with over 1,00,000 persons attending mass in his native Poland. Church bells pealed in churches across Europe and in Africa, Latin America and Asia special ceremonies were held in his memory.

In Saint Peter's Square, the Pope's name was greeted with tumultuous applause by the crowd at the beginning of the mass concelebrated by dozens of cardinals. People wept, held hand or prayed silently as choral singing engulfed the huge piazza, surrounded by tall columns and renaissance building. The open air mass was celebrated by his secretary of state, Cardinal Angelo Sodano.

One of the late Pope's aides, Archbishop Allesandro Sandri, read out a final message from the Pope: "love converts hearts and gives peace." Humanity "sometimes seems lost and dominated by the power of evil, selfishness and fear," said the message.

The Pope, his face serene, had red and white vestments and a white mitre. He was laid out on a raised velvet-draped dais, flanked by two Swiss Guards. A crucifix, crooked in an elbow, flanked his body to the left. His head, propped on velvet pillows, leaned slightly to the right. On his feet were brown leather shoes.

In his homily during the mass, Cardinal Sodano said: "It is true, our soul is shaken by a painful event. Our father and shepherd, John Paul II, has left us. For 26 years he carried the Gospel of Christian hope to all the squares around the world, teaching everyone that our death is only a passage to the heavenly fatherland"

**'Witness to serenity':**

The cardinal, who was present when the pontiff passed away, said the Pope's death was serene. "I was a witness to this serenity as I stood praying by the agonizing Pope's bedside," said Cardinal Sodano, straying from his prepared text. "Serenity is the fruit of faith," he added. ....

Among the first dignitaries to pay their respect were the Italian President, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, and his wife, Franca. They were followed by the Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, and members of the Cabinet. Dozens of officials and cardinals of the Roman Curia, or Vatican Government, also lined up to file past the hushed room.

**Official certification:** The Vatican spokesman, Dr. Joaquin Navarro-valls, announced that the papal doctor, Renato Buzzonetti, Cardinal Camarlengo Eduardo Matines Somalo and other Vatican dignitaries today officially certified the death of the Pope.

The College of Cardinals will hold a congregation on Monday to plan the funeral. He is to be buried between Wednesday and Friday. Italy's ANSA news agency, citing reliable sources, said it would take place on Thursday at the earliest.

John Paul II was the first non-Italian Pope in four –and-half centuries, and the first from eastern Europe.

**2. India declares 3-day state mourning, p.1.**

New Delhi, April 3. The government has declared a three-day state mourning from Sunday as a mark of respect to Pope John Paul II. Flags at all Government buildings through the country will fly at half-mast during the period.

All official entertainments for the next three days stand cancelled. The Union Home Secretary, V.K. Duggal, has conveyed the decision to all concerned, including Ministries and departments. The Home Ministry has requested the State Governments and Union Territory administrations to take action accordingly.

**Our Staff Reporter adds:**

The Catholics of the Archdiocese of Delhi, who make for roughly 1.25 lakh faithful, have been thronging their respective churches since Sunday morning to offer prayers for the Pope. While many families also conducted spontaneous prayers at their homes, round-the-clock prayer services are on at the Sacred Heart Cathedral at Gole Dak Khana here and the prayer vigil is being conducted in different languages and will conclude with the funeral of the Holy Father.

A special Mass will be offered at 6-30 p.m. on Monday (April 4) at St. Columba's School grounds which will be presided over by the Pro-Nuncio, the Vatican Ambassador to India, Archbishop Pedro Lopez Quintana.

An inter-religious prayer meeting is also being organized at 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday (April 5) at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in which representatives from all religions of the country are expected to participate.

The Archdiocese said many important leaders of the Country have also visited the Sacred Heart Cathedral to pay their last respects to the Holy Father and been signing the Visitor's Book kept there. Among those who have already signed the book are the Delhi Chief Minister, Sheila Dikshit, and several union Ministers.

Most of the Catholic Churches in Delhi have displayed the Holy Father's photography decorated with beautiful flowers and candles and are holding prayers.

#### **Catholic schools to remain closed today**

New Delhi, April 3. All Catholic schools in the Capital will remain closed on Monday as a mark of respect for Pope John Paul II who died in Vatican in the early hours of Sunday. Schools run by the Delhi Orthodox Diocese will also be closed.

#### **3. Three Indian Cardinals to attend funeral, p.1**

Kolkata, April 3. Three out of the five cardinals from India will leave for the Vatican to participate in the papal election for a new Pope.

They are also likely to attend the pope's funeral. Sister Nirmala, Superior General, Missionaries of Charity, will also attend the funeral.

The election process will begin between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> day from the day of the pope's death. A formal notification, calling for a meeting of all cardinals across the world is to be issued soon by the Vatican, father Babu Joseph, Spokesperson of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, told The Hindu over telephone from New Delhi.

The three cardinals are from Ranchi, Mumbai and Kerala, according to the secretary, Archbishop of Kolkata, Father Patrick Rodrigues.

The other two cardinals are not entitled to vote as they are over 80 years of age.

About 120 cardinals from across the world are expected to participate in the election, he added.

The news of the death of the pope reached Mother House, headquarters of the Missionaries of Charity, at around 2 a.m. today.

Special masses and prayer meetings were held there and in churches of the city during the day in his memory, a spokesperson said.

Speaking to presspersons here, Sister Nirmala described the pope's death the "will of God". She said "the Holy Father has now gone to God".

#### **4. Death of Pope mourned, p.5**

Simla April 3. His holiness the Dalai Lama has expressed his deep condolences on the demise of Pope John Paul II and called him a true "spiritual practitioner"

In spite of failing health the pope continued the mission of bringing peace to the World and did relentless efforts to visit different parts of the World to promote harmony, spirituality and tranquility, he said.

The Himachal Pradesh Governor V.S. Kokje and Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh have expressed grief over the demise of Pope John Paul II.

Mr Kokje, in his condolence message, said that Pope John Paul relentlessly worked for propagating the message of world peace and universal brotherhood.

Himachal Pradesh Government would observe three-day state mourning from today as a mark of respect to late Pope John Paul II.

Meanwhile Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda has expressed shock and grief over the demise of His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

In Punjab, a large number of people today prayed for Pope John Paul II and praised his role in strengthening the spirit of brotherhood among people world wide. ....

#### 5. Editorial: **A Complex Papacy**, p.10

Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, he with the Polish name that Vatican-watchers found close to unpronounceable when his shock election by the Sacred College of Cardinals was sprung on the world on October 16, 1978, died not just as the third longest serving Pope in the history of the Roman Catholic Church. He was of course the first non-Italian Pope in 450 years, the one who spoke the most languages and wrote the most prolifically, the globe-trotter who chalked up more miles (by air and popemobile) than dozens of his predecessors put together. His quarter century reign as John Paul II witnessed earth-shaking changes especially in the socio-political sphere, and his pro-active role in influencing these changes earned him numerous "Man of the Century" citations from theological fellow-travellers, ideological admirers, and the faithful. A trained actor, athlete, philosopher, theologian, writer, and rhetorician, Pope John Paul II was charismatic until the last (even when his health was ravaged by Parkinson's disease and a mini-textbook of other ailments). He used his formidable intellectual and physical powers to defend and clarify Catholic doctrinaire teachings against diverse forces clamouring and working for change. His critics, liberals as well as radicals, considered him reactionary to the core, intolerant of dissent, a centralizing authoritarian who went so far as to pack the College of Cardinals with those who, for the most part, seemed to believe that God's work meant resisting doctrinal and social change.

His original selection might have been influenced as much by his uncompromising anti-communist views and his readiness to do ideological combat as it was by his credentials as a theologian, intellectual, and polymath. Lifelong, he led hardcore resistance within his Church to abortion rights and contraception, to the ordination of women, to liberalization of the absolute rule of priestly celibacy, to any truck with divorce. After the scandal of priest paedophiles broke out in America, the Vatican's response was found, even by many American Catholics, to be temporising and "out of touch". The Pope's view on the equality of women and their role as mothers, educators, and mainstays of the family were virtually identical to the ideas recently expounded on the subject by the Sarsangchhalak (supreme) of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, K.S. Sudarshan. Cracking down on "liberation theology" and radical Catholic dissent, the Vatican he shaped did not hesitate to employ the weapon of excommunication to ensure adherence to Church teachings. But to note only these aspects would be to miss the complexities and positive surprises of the papacy of John Paul II.

His 14 encyclicals suggest that his mission as 'Vicar of Christ' went well beyond resisting change. Some of these papal instructions are justly celebrated for their profound, elegantly argued positions on vital issues of social and economic justice, mass deprivation, human rights and dignity, the precious value of life and war and peace. The Pope characterized "extreme poverty...{as} perhaps the most pervasive and paralyzing violation of human rights in our world." The implacable enemy of communism ended up criticizing capitalism for its heartlessness and decadence. His papacy saw a leap forward in the Church's positive interactions with Jews, Muslims, and Hindus. He also went further than any previous Pope in apologizing towards the end of his reign (through a startling gesture of public repentance at a Sunday mass in St. Peter's Basilica) for the errors and misdeeds of the Church over the past 2000 years. He came out firmly on the side of the peoples of the less developed countries on the question of third world debt. He opposed United States intervention in Central America in the 1980s, the 1991 Gulf War, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, arms sales, and the arms race. In all this he center-staged human rights and values, linking them integrally with the Church's mission. For all these reasons, John Paul II's papacy will be an extraordinarily hard act to follow.

#### 6. **Pope's peace efforts will be admired: Chandrika**, p.12

Colombo, April 3. The Sri Lankan President, Chandrika Kumaratunga, in her condolence message, described Pope John Paul II as "most revered and popular global personality".

His efforts "to promote peace and harmony, especially in the immediate post cold war period, within and between nations, would continue to be admired in the years to come," Ms. Kumaratunga said.

“Recalling with reverence” the late pope’s visit to Sri Lanka in 1995, the president said, he “eloquently expressed loving kindness, compassion, sympathy and equanimity, which are abiding values upheld by Christianity as well as the other great religions, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam, practiced in Sri Lanka.”

The Pope had ‘for over a quarter century spread the message of peace, reaching out to people across the earth, encouraging tolerance and universal understanding’

Ms. Kumarathunga said, “The contribution of the Holy Father to strengthen the warm relations that exist between Sri Lanka and the Holy Sea has been substantial and is greatly appreciated and admired by the people of this country” the president said.

The pope visited Sri Lanka in 1995 for the beatification of Joseph Vaz, who hailed from Goa, and preached in Shri Lanka (then called Ceylon) from 1686 until his death in 1711, in Kandy.

#### **7. Silent grief grips Poland, p. 22**

Krakow (Poland), April 3. They were already there when the end came, perhaps 10,000 or 20,000 people, under the window of the archbishop’s residence where Pope John Paul II used to talk to people on visits to this city. There were not very many tears. It was more a kind of awed and pensive stillness under the dark sky. Candles lined the windows of the residence; in the distance was the sound of a siren. And then, around 10 p.m. on Saturday, the people learned that the Pope was dead. They sank collectively to their knees.

The Roman Catholic Church lost one of its most charismatic and influential leaders, but Poland lost one of the great men of this country’s turbulent and tragic history. So Krakow was out, lighting candles, saying prayers and remembering the man who represented to them nothing less than the saviour of the national Polish soul. – *New York Times News Service*.

#### **8. Daunting task for next pope, p.22**

Vatican city, April 3. Nearly 27 years ago, John Paul II assumed the papacy in an era when the Church confronted the real prospect of nuclear war in a world divided between East and West.

Now, the man who succeeds him will face the task of overseeing a church and speaking to a world increasingly divided between North and South, between rich and poor, between secular and devout.

The new pope will face a dizzying array of modern-day challenges, internal as well as external, and with little consensus from church leaders about their top priorities.

In Europe, the Catholic hierarchy is threatened by an advancing secular culture and a dramatic surge of muslim immigrants who are building mosques across the continent.

#### **Twin scourges**

In Africa, the Church faces the twin scourges of AIDS, and poverty, in Latin America, it copes with the steady migration of parts of a traditionally Catholic population toward evangelical Protestantism. And in the U.S. the Church is still reeling from the clergy sexual abuse crisis and grappling with a fast changing set of moral questions provoked by advances in medicine and genetics.

Church officials in Rome are particularly concerned about what they perceive to be a run away secular culture in Europe that has left the Church withering and frail in very seat of Christian civilization. In Italy, Spain, France, Ireland, and elsewhere in Western Europe, pews are often empty, seminaries are seeing their numbers dwindle dramatically, and the Church is under siege from a modern culture increasingly alienated from the teaching of the Church - *New York Times News Services*.

*(Hindu, Monday April 4, 2005).*