**John Paul the Great**

**Instructions:** Fill in the blanks (as best as you can) while we watch the Witness to Hope DVD. Answer the rest of the questions for homework.

### BACKGROUND

1. Name: **Karol Wojtyla**, pronounced like Care-ell Voy-ty-tla

2. From: **Poland**  Born: **1920**  Died: **Apr. 2, 2005**

3. Pope for **26½ years**, from **1978** to **2005**.  Feast Day: **October 22**

   (Day JP2 was inaugurated as pope)

### DVD NOTES

<table>
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<th>I. Introduction [3:08]</th>
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<td><strong>4.</strong> JP2 is a man of many faces: poet, playwright, actor, philosopher, mystic, pastor, and witness to hope.</td>
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<th>II. Life as a Youth [7:42]</th>
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<td><strong>5.</strong> The Wojtyla family lives in a modest apartment across the street from the church.</td>
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<td><strong>6.</strong> Karol loves playing soccer and is called &quot;Lolak the Goalie&quot; by his friends.</td>
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<td><strong>7.</strong> When Karol is 9 years old his mother dies of heart disease.  At 12 years old his older brother dies of scarlet fever.</td>
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<td><strong>8.</strong> After the death of his mother, Karol’s father begins a life of constant prayer.  At times Karol would wake up in the middle of the night and find him praying on his knees.</td>
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<td><strong>9.</strong> Sometime after the death of his mom, Karol begins looking to Mary as his new mother.</td>
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<td><strong>10.</strong> Poland is arguably the most intensely Catholic country in the world.</td>
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<td><strong>11.</strong> Upon observing his father’s constant prayer, Karol writes, “My home was my 1st seminary.”</td>
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III. The Second World War [27:02]

11 During the 1930s Adolf Hitler reigns to the west in Germany, Joseph Stalin reigns to the east in the Soviet Union (Russia), and anti-semitism (hatred of Jews) is intensifying across Europe.

12 Many of Karol’s childhood friends are Jewish.

13 As a young man, Karol was very handsome and well built, a gifted student, natural athlete, great actor, and had a wide group of friends. He also oftentimes had messy hair.

14 When the Nazis begin attacking Poland, Karol and his father flee for about 10 days to the east, only to find another army (the Soviet Army) preparing to invade Poland.

15 One of the Nazi’s (and later the Communist Soviet’s) main goals was to eliminate as much of Polish culture as possible.

16 In an effort to “decapitate” the Church, the Nazis take over the cathedral and send nearly 5,000 priests and nuns to concentration camps.

17 While studying the writings of St. John of the Cross, Karol thinks of joining a Carmelite monastery, but they aren’t accepting new candidates during the war.

18 In 1941 Karol’s father dies. The 20 year old Karol says, “I never felt so alone in my life.”

19 Once the “Final Solution” begins almost all of Karol’s Jewish friends are killed.

20 During the war, Karol begins looking for answers to the meaning of life. Why is he still alive while so many others are dead?

21 In 1942 Karol joins an underground seminary being conducted by Archbishop Sapieha in Krakow. He now lives a double life.

22 One night, while walking home from work, what could have been a tragedy becomes a sign from God. Karol is hit by a German truck, suffers a severe concussion, and is left for dead. A passerby finds him and brings him aid. This brush with death deepens Karol’s conviction that God has a plan for him. His life has a purpose.

23 To prevent an uprising, the Nazis go all around the city arresting young men. They search Karol’s house, where he’s behind a closed door praying that they won’t find him.
IV. The War Ends [5:06]

24. In May, 1945, the war in Europe ends. Poland’s freedom, however, is short-lived. The Soviets begin a 40 year long attempt at making Poland a communist nation. World War II is coined “The war we lost twice.”

COMMUNISM. Communism (sometimes used interchangeably with Marxism and Socialism) is a political movement based upon the writings of Karl Marx, the German political philosopher who lived in the 1800s. In its purest form, communism is the idea that everyone works for the common good and the whole community has ownership of everything. All that is produced is to be distributed equally to everyone, which would theoretically mean no one would be poor. However, communism has never worked this way. It is an almost untenable system, reliant on people’s good nature and perfect leadership. The Catholic Church opposes Marxism, which is an atheistic form of communism, because it rejects God, betrays human rights (including the right to own private property), and gives the government sole power over pretty much everything.

25. In November 1, 1946, Karol is ordained to the priesthood.

V. The Communist Battalion [11:32]

26. At 26, Fr. Wojtyla leaves Poland for the first time. He is sent to Rome to get his doctorate in theology.

27. During this time people can’t gather spontaneously outside of government-controlled events. Despite this, Fr. Wojtyla escorts students into the natural world of the Polish countryside, making friendships that will last for decades.

28. Fr. Wojtyla’s friends oftentimes called him “Uncle,” both as a way to acknowledge their close relationship with him and also to protect his identity as he travels the countryside.

29. While on these trips, Fr. Wojtyla is introduced to kayaking, which becomes the perfect vehicle to get to know each person on an individual basis. Fr. Wojtyla was always listening and questioning, and therefore learning from the friends he traveled with.

30. On these trips Mass is celebrated by using a kayak as the altar and a cross made from paddles.

VI. Professor in Lublin [18:20]

31. In 1954, at the age of 34, Fr. Wojtyla accepts a position as a philosophy teacher.

32. Fr. Wojtyla teaches for the next 24 years, specializing in ethics (what is right vs. wrong and how to tell the difference). His classes are standing room only.
At only 38 years old, Fr. Wojtyla becomes the youngest bishop in Poland.

In 1962, Pope John XXIII starts the most important event since the Reformation in the 16th century: Vatican II. As a bishop, Fr. Wojtyla is invited to attend.

Near the outskirts of Krakow, the communists build a city named, Nowa Huta. It is the first town in the thousand year history of Poland to be constructed without a church. They said it would be a town without God.

In 1960 Bishop Wojtyla’s first book, titled Love and Responsibility, is published. It explores the ethics of sex, love, and marriage.

*When Bishop Wojtyla became pope he spent more time writing and speaking about love, sex, and relationships. Between 1979-1984 John Paul II shared 129 mini-essays that would later be commonly referred to as The Theology of the Body. The Theology of the Body has been called “a theological time bomb set to go off some time in the 21st century”. It has already changed thousands of lives, but sadly most Catholics still don’t know about it or have chosen to reject it before even studying it.*

In Nowa Huta, The Ark church was finally built, constructed entirely by volunteer labor. In 1976, 70,000 people came to stand in the rain for the dedication of this church. An emotional John Paul II speaks to the crowd. He says, “This city belongs to you. No one can arbitrarily dictate your beliefs. This city is the city of the children of God.”

In August of 1978, Catholics have a new pope, John Paul I (named after the two previous popes, John XIII and Paul VI). His papacy lasts for only 33 days due to a heart attack.

VII. A New Father [6:25]

On October 16th, 1978, the cardinals elect Karol Wojtyla. He is the first non-Italian pope in 455 years. Wojtyla is overwhelmed and feels “alone as a man can be”.

Bishop Wojtyla chooses the name John Paul as a sign of continuation with his predecessor. However, JP2 will not be like most popes before him. He breaks precedent right away by choosing to be greeted by his brother cardinals standing up. This was the first signal that things were going to be very different during his papacy.

John Paul II, who in Poland could rarely speak to large crowds, now has a global audience. He comes to the papacy knowing that the 20th century has been a century of fear, terror, and suffering, and so one of his first (and continued) phrases became, “Be not afraid!”.
VIII. The Impact on Poland [8:44]

42 It is reported that during John Paul II’s first trip to Poland he was seen by over 13 million Poles, which was over 1/3 of the whole population. Virtually everyone else watched him on TV or heard him on the radio. When it comes time to leave, John Paul II has a hard time saying, “Goodbye”.

43 In 1980, 13 months after leaving Poland, thousands of workers at the Lenin Shipyards form together to start the Solidarity movement. John Paul II’s trip to Poland was the igniter of this non-violent revolution.

IX. The Injured Father [6:42]

44 On May 13, 1981, John Paul II is shot at point blank range in St. Peter’s Square. His injuries are so severe that he receives the last rites.

45 When John Paul II talks about this experience he says he had the presentiment that he would be saved. He felt that Mary was at his side: “I finger fired, another directed the bullet.”

46 One year after being shot, John Paul II states, “In the designs of providence, there are no mere coincidences.” *(Or as many people say today, “Everything happens for a reason”)*

X. Free Poland [2:19]

47 After the fall of communism, John Paul II returned to Poland with an unexpected message. Rather than congratulate the Poles on new freedom, he warns them of the dangers of a new materialism. He believes the fundamental crisis of the modern world remains unresolved.

XI. Modern Times [12:37]

48 In Latin America, some priests believe that social change requires a violent revolution. They adopt a “liberation theology” that combines Marxist ideas (communism) with Catholic social teaching. John Paul II insists that this is an impossible compromise.

49 As pope, John Paul II upholds an unshakeable stance on birth control, homosexuality, abortion, celibacy, and women’s ordination to the priesthood. He doesn’t take the issues lightly. In fact, he writes extensively about each of them.

*Based on my own experience and from what many holy saints and theologians have said, most people don’t ever look at WHY the Catholic Church teaches what it does. Most people grow up within a culture that doesn’t understand the reason for these teachings. Most modern-day media (TV shows, news outlets, Facebook, comment sections on YouTube, etc.) reject these teachings, ignore them, mock them, or unfairly label them (“ultra conservative”, “too old school”, “misogynistic”, “intolerant”, etc.). This makes it very tough to be 100% Catholic today, since you are almost guaranteed to also be rejected, ignored, mocked, and unfairly labeled.
50 At 74, John Paul II is diagnosed with _______________ disease, a degenerative disease of the nervous system which eventually made it difficult for JP2 to speak and caused his body to shake uncontrollably at times.

51 John Paul II reaches out to other religions (such as ____________ and ____________), as well as other Christians. He was one of the first truly ____________ figures in the world, meaning he reached out to non-Catholic Christians (___________ and ____________) Christians) in an attempt to bring us all back together again.

52 Despite being elderly and having very obvious physical difficulties, John Paul II inspires and attracts young people everywhere he goes. On one occasion in the Philippines, he gathers the largest crowd in human history (nearly _______________ people). When asked why the youth of the world are so enamored with him, he simply responds, “Marik, it’s ____________”.

* John Paul II started World Youth Day back in 1986. Every two or three years a large city in the world is picked for youth Catholics (teens/college students) to gather and meet for an awesome, multiple day schedule full of Catholic events (speakers, music, Reconciliation, adoration, Mass, etc.).
  Each World Youth Day typically closes with a Mass presided by the pope himself.
  Many people have experienced life-changing conversions at World Youth Days.

53 When John Paul II prays he looks like a ____________. The world around him ceases to exist.

54 During a Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica in 2000 John Paul II publicly asks forgiveness for all of the ____________ Catholics have ever committed against others. Nine days later he goes to the Holy Land (Israel) and asks forgiveness for the sufferings Christian have caused _____________. Almost the entire country watched this on TV.

XII. Conclusion [6:38]

55 The age we are embarking on is one that threatens the transcendentalness of humanity and the need for ____________ in our lives.