



1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II passed away on April 2, 2005;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II was born Karol Jozef Wojtyla on
5 May 18, 1920, in Wadowice, Poland, the second son of Karol
6 Wojtyla Sr., a retired army officer and tailor, and Emilia
7 Kaczorowska Wojtyla, a schoolteacher of Lithuanian descent;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, He was a brilliant student and athlete, excelling
10 at skiing, swimming, kayaking, and soccer; his earliest
11 passions were religion, poetry, and the theater; and

12 WHEREAS, After the Germans invaded Poland, he escaped
13 deportation and imprisonment in late 1940 by taking a job as a
14 stone cutter in a quarry and then in a chemical plant, while at
15 the same time studying at an underground seminary in Krakow;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, He was eventually ordained in 1946, assuming
18 priestly duties in 1949 as Chaplain to university students at
19 Krakow's St. Florian's Church; the Church was located next to
20 Jagiellonian University where he was working on his second
21 doctorate degree in theology, having already earned a doctorate
22 in philosophy; when the University's Theology Department was
23 abolished in 1954 under pressure from the communist government,
24 the entire faculty reconstituted itself at the Seminary of
25 Krakow, where he continued his studies; and

26 WHEREAS, When the Vatican Council II began the
27 deliberations in 1962 that would revolutionize the Church,
28 Karol Wojtyla was one of its intellectual leaders and took
29 special interest in religious freedom; the same year, he was
30 named the Acting Archbishop of Krakow when the incumbent died;

1 he was officially installed as Archbishop in March 1964; and

2 WHEREAS, He made a name for himself both as a formidable
3 theologian - he taught at the Krakow Seminary and the Catholic
4 University of Lublin - and as a staunch defender of Catholic
5 interests; and

6 WHEREAS, He was elevated to Cardinal on June 26, 1967, and
7 was formally installed in a Vatican ceremony two days later;
8 despite his prominence and the respect in which he was held by
9 his fellow Catholics, his election as Pope John Paul II on
10 October 16, 1978, came as a surprise; and

11 WHEREAS, He was the first-ever Slavic Pope and the first
12 non-Italian to serve in office since the German and Dutch Pope
13 Adrian VI assumed the papacy in 1522; his Polish heritage was a
14 great source of pride for the one million people of Polish
15 ethnic descent living in Illinois; and

16 WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II revolutionized the papacy that
17 oversees the spiritual lives of over one billion Catholics; a
18 conservative and champion of long-standing Church traditions,
19 he was also the most-traveled Pope in history and very much a
20 man of the world; he first traveled as Holy Father to Chicago
21 in 1979; and

22 WHEREAS, As Pope, his support of the Solidarity movement
23 was instrumental and ultimately led to the downfall of the
24 communist government; John Paul's role in the fall of communism
25 was a subtle but crucial one; his visit to Poland in 1979,
26 eight months after his elevation to the papal throne, saw the
27 first mass gatherings ever witnessed in the communist state;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II brought a strong focus on human
30 rights to his preaching and his travels gave his teachings a

1 global political impact unknown to previous Popes; in Poland,
2 Eastern Europe, Africa, the Philippines, Haiti, and dozens of
3 other places, the Pope's preaching on human rights and
4 individual liberties helped inspire those who fought for
5 political change; as Pope, he not only spread the gospel, but
6 also transformed the Roman papacy into an authoritative
7 spokesman for human rights; and

8 WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II was the first to visit a
9 synagogue and the memorial at Auschwitz to victims of the
10 Holocaust; in ending the Catholic-Jewish estrangement, he
11 called Jews "our elder brothers"; the Pope expanded upon that
12 in a March 2000 speech in which he asked forgiveness for many
13 of his Church's past sins, including its treatment of Jews,
14 heretics, women, and native peoples; and

15 WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II was the third longest-serving
16 pontiff in history, behind St. Peter's 32 years and Pope Pius
17 IX's 31 years and seven months; his humanity, love of children,
18 and ceaseless efforts to bring the Catholic message to as wide
19 an audience as possible marked him as one of the dominant and
20 most-respected figures of the 20th century and early 21st
21 century; therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
23 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
24 Pope John Paul II, as he was an extraordinary hero for our
25 times; he was an inspiring leader of the Catholic Church, a
26 wonderful warrior for freedom and democracy, and people will
27 never forget the role he played in giving inspiration and hope
28 to the people of Poland; he truly was a great man of holiness.