

POPE JOHN PAUL II: ROLE MODEL FOR THE WORLD

On April 2, God called home the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II. The Catholic Church lost its leader and the world lost its most prominent role model.

Never before has any public figure, from any quarter of society, captured the love of so many people as John Paul II. For the most part, even his biggest critics found it almost impossible to dislike the man, so genuinely charismatic was he. He had an ability to reach young and old, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. He was truly a saintly person.

The complete text of the Catholic League's news release on the death of Pope John Paul II appears below.

"Karol Wojtyla was an intellectual, actor, philosopher, athlete and human-rights advocate, but above all, he was a priest. That is what defined him more than anything else—he was a priest in service to the Lord.

"Having traveled to over 100 nations, and having reached out to the members of all the world's religions, he managed to touch people in a way very few have. It is only fitting that someday he will be known as John Paul the Great, making him only the third pontiff in history to be bestowed this honorific title.

"Pope John Paul II will be remembered for many things, but at this time it is important to recall his signature statement, 'Be Not Afraid.' It was in his first homily as pope in 1978 that John Paul broached this phrase, and it is one that he restated thousands of times over during his papacy. That these were not empty words can be disputed by no one: consider what happened after he told millions of his fellow countrymen in Poland one year later, 'Do not be afraid to tell the truth.'

“John Paul II’s unyielding commitment to speaking the truth will surely prove to be one of his most enduring legacies. In a world where moral relativism runs rampant, and the lies of postmodernist thought are trumpeted, nothing could be more countercultural than the pope’s speeches and writings on the existence of an objective moral order. His courage, along with his intellectual acumen, was astounding.

“It is only just that we remember Pope John Paul II for what he was, and will always be—a role model for the world.”