



0. Pope John XXIII - Story Preface

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10. Pope John XXIII

Pope John was a pope of all the people. His two main goals were to assure all Catholics that the church was their church and that it cared for all of them. Secondly, he wanted to bring people, countries, and the world together to sort out their differences.

Pope John would stop and chat with everyone he encountered. One day as he was wandering the halls of the Vatican he came across an electrician who was working there. The man did not recognize him as the Pope - he thought he was just another of priests who worked at the Vatican. Pope John asked the man how things were going and the man complained that the Vatican paid terribly low wages.

Pope John said “We should do something about that”.

The electrician replied” Yes, if it were only possible, Father”.

The Pope began smiling and answered’ “Just between us, I am not a Priest. I am the Pope”.

The next day all the Vatican workers received a 25% raise.

Although Pope John XXII had enormous power now, he still was quite humble. He told his assistant:

“Last night I had a dream about a serious problem and I thought I must tell the Pope about this.
Then, I woke up and remembered ‘**I am the Pope**’”.

By far the most important thing he ever did was to hold an ecumenical council - a meeting where Christian officials from all Protestant dominations were invited. It was unheard of. His staff was against it. But Pope John insisted. The council was called Vatican II and took place in 1962. It was a huge success and mended fences of disagreements which had lasted for centuries.

Today, you may think that the Catholic church has always been the way it is now: holding services in the language of local country, Catholics and Protestants freely visiting each other's services, and respect and tolerance of all religions. But the Catholic world was much different before Pope John XXIII - a gentle man from humble beginnings.

As he lay dying in 1963 with three of his brother and sisters by his side, the world listened to every word he spoke. But Pope John XXII died saying the same prayer he had prayed his entire life. “May the world be one.”

In 2014, the Catholic church gave the highest honor of all: sainthood. So the world now knows him as Saint John XXIII.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Pope-John-XXIII-Pope-John-XXIII-The-Man-Who-Loved-All-People>

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St. John XXIII

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