



NEWS RELEASE

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K of C Museum to present exhibit honoring Pope John Paul II

(NEW HAVEN, Conn.) — To coincide with the May 1 beatification of Pope John Paul II, the Knights of Columbus Museum will present a new exhibition in the late pope's honor, *Blessed: A Tribute to John Paul II*.

The exhibition, which will recall and celebrate the life and legacy of the Polish pontiff, opens on the sixth anniversary of his death, April 2, and runs through June 30. It will feature some of John Paul's personal effects as well as mementos of his apostolic journeys to North America.

The exhibition will also include a selection of paintings by Italian artist Francesco Guadagnuolo (b. 1956). The works, which were on exhibition at the Vatican as part of a 2010 symposium by the Pontifical Council for Health Care Ministry, reflect on John Paul's courageous and faithful witness during his infirmities at the end of his pontificate.

A video presentation on the pope's long and close relationship with the Knights of Columbus is also a part of the exhibition.

Pope John Paul II was known and respected by both learned and the simple, the well-to-do and the lowly. He was a champion of the weak and marginalized, and the world came together in mourning at his death, April 2, 2005.

Born Karol Józef Wojtyła on May 18, 1920 in Wadowice Poland, he began college studies in drama in 1938. His studies were interrupted a year later by the Nazi occupation of his country. Sensing a call to the priesthood, he began clandestine seminary studies in 1942 and was ultimately ordained Nov. 1, 1946, after World War II. Father Wojtyła initially held pastoral duties but later obtained an advanced degree and taught at the Catholic University of Lublin. He was consecrated a bishop in 1958 and was a participant in the Second Vatican Council. He was elevated to the College of Cardinals in 1967 and, on Oct. 16, 1978, was elected to succeed Pope John Paul I. His pontificate of more than 26 years was the second longest in the history of the papacy.

Basilian Father Thomas Rosica, who knew Pope John Paul II well and served as director of World Youth Day in Toronto (2002) will present two free lectures on the pope's life: "The Great Laboratories of Faith: World Youth Days in the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II" (April 6 at 6 p.m.) and "The Suffering and Death of a Shepherd: What Pope John Paul II taught us in the end" (April 7 at 2 p.m.).

The Museum is located at 1 State Street in New Haven and is open daily from 10-5. Admission and parking are free. For more information, please call 203-865-0400 or visit kofcmuseum.org

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