



THE FUTURE POPE JOHN RECEIVED HIS RED HAT AS CARDINAL IN 1953

ANGELO GIUSEPPE RONCALLI STUDYING FOR PRIESTHOOD AT 19 PONTIFF SOUGHT TO UNITE CHRISTIANITY

BY 1934 HE WAS A BISHOP

Ecumenical Council will remain monument to pope John's reign

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS When Angelo Giuseppe Cardinal Roncalli was elected pope in the autumn of 1958 some observers thought his reign would mark time. He was then almost 77 years old.

But the Pope, John XXIII, the name Cardinal Roncalli adopted, promptly ended such notions. This son of an Italian shrewdly embarked on a 40-mile journey across Italy to pray at shrines in Loretto and Assisi.

He encouraged a new spirit of brotherhood, the theme of eventual Christian unity was emphasized repeatedly through his reign, and the Roman Catholic Church entered into its closest contacts with Protestants since the Reformation 400 years ago.

The Italian farmer's son with a love of travel added a more significant page to papal history that day a spectacular train ride would indicate.

A precedent breaker, he studied his reign with landmarks in every area of papal activity. And no landmark stood higher than the great worldwide council of the Roman Catholic bishops.

The Ecumenical Council was his major undertaking, a bold venture that other popes only had contemplated since the last Ecumenical Council at the Vatican in 1869-1870.

BOUGHT CHURCH RENEWAL Pope John conceived the idea within three months of his coronation. He set a goal of internal church renewal, pledging to pursue his own church first before pursuing the elusive goal of a united Christianity.

Even after the lateran Pacts of 1929, no one put the new accord between the Vatican and Italy to the full test until Pope John.

Following the papal election in 1958, Italian streets were crowded as a legion of white-robed cardinals gathered to see his throne in St. Peter's Basilica.

More than once he added his own voice from outside the council to remove an obstacle, to simplify a procedure, to speed things up—all the while insisting on free expression for the bishops.

COUNCIL IMPACT GREATER As the first stage of the council drew to a close in December 1962, a host of projects still lay uncompleted on the agenda.

By its very existence, even if it were dissolved without further action, it had already spanned the first great christening of Christianity.

Not since the Reformation had representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and of non-Catholic churches met together with such goodwill at such high level. For two days after the council opened, the Pope received non-Catholic observers in a unique audience in the Vatican.

The United States government, which never had commented on a papal pronouncement, called it an "historic ecclesiastical event."

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President Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote the Pope that "I share with you the fervent desire for a peaceful solution of the momentous problems which beset mankind."

He called on the world's leaders to channel man's genius into paths of peace. He said the pope did not ask for "those momentous means of war discovered in our time, which can cause fraternal massacre and universal slaughter."

He created another seven cardinals and brought the total to an unprecedented 85. He said he was "renewing the names of the three cardinals 'in petra'—in his breast. The three were never secret, presumably because the live in Communist lands where added difficulties might have followed elevation to the purple."

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in 1922. Twelve years later—on Aug. 10, 1934—he was ordained a priest in Rome's Santa Maria in Monte church. He celebrated his first mass in the Great Basilica of St. Peter's.

The qualifications of the young priest were immediately obvious to his bishop, Msgr. Radini-Tedeschi of Bergamo, and Roncalli became the personal secretary in 1905. He held this post until the bishop died in 1914.

At Bergamo the future Pope gained an early knowledge of the administrative structure of the Roman Catholic Church. He also gained experience as a teacher, giving a course in ecclesiastical history at the Bergamo seminary.

History had been his passion, and he started to indulge it. He could do research in the archives of the Milan curia and the Ambrosiana library. This Catholic institute then was presided over by Msgr. Achille Ratti, who was to become Pope Pius XI.

Out of Roncalli's research came the first volume of a biography of his father's day—Nov. 4—was the day of his coronation. Pius XI, who served as a chaplain in the Italian army, a three-year term on the faculty of the seminary.

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OF PEASANT STOCK Pope John—born at 76 the was within a month of 77) was elected at the time of his election as pontiff than any pope in 228 years—moved with an energy that belied his age. (Clement XII was 78 when he became pope in 1758. He reigned for 10 years.)

His dynamism seemed to be a heritage of his robust peasant background. The Roncalli had lived for centuries in the shadow of the Alps in Sotto Il Monte, a northern Italian village with a name meaning "Under the Mountains."

It was Elizabeth's second meeting with a pope but he first as a reigning monarch and head of the Church of England. In 1861, when she was Princess Elizabeth, she was received by Pope Pius XII. In both instances she was accompanied by Prince Philip to the private meetings.

OTHER CALLERS An unprecedented event occurred in the winter of 1950 when Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, then Archbishop of Canterbury, and Pope John held an hour-long conference at the Vatican. Never before had a primate of the Church of England visited in his English version.

LONGEST ENCYCLICAL Pope John's third encyclical, issued in the summer of 1961, was the longest in the history of the church—25,000 words in its English version.

Entered seminary at a tender 11 So just after his 11th birthday, when he asked to enter a seminary, the future Pontiff's parents agreed. Most farm boys would have halted their schooling at that age, but the other Roncalli decided to work harder so that Angelo Giuseppe could be spared.

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