

SAINT *of the* WEEK

John XXIII

Feast—October 11

1881–1963

Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli was the oldest son and fourth of fourteen children in a farming family in northern Italy. In seminary, he joined the secular Franciscans and was ordained



in 1904. In WWI, he carried stretchers for the Italian army and served as a chaplain. In 1925, he was ordained a bishop and served for ten years as a papal diplomat in Bulgaria. Then in 1935, he became the apostolic delegate to Turkey and Greece. As papal envoy during WWII, he worked to save the lives of thousands of Jewish people by issuing transit visas from the Apostolic Delegation. In 1944, he was appointed to serve as nuncio to France. He was named a cardinal in 1953, and five years later, just shy of 78 years old, he was elected pope. Within months of his election, he announced the convocation of an ecumenical council of the Church and a revision of the Code of Canon Law. The Second Vatican Council was convened in 1962. As pope, he became known as a big-hearted man, and drew the affection of many Catholics, as a kindly father figure. One of

his most famous encyclicals is *Peace on Earth*, which was issued the same year as his death in 1963. St. John XXIII was beatified by St. John Paul II in 2000, and canonized by Pope Francis in 2014.

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