

I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding to me.

□ 1715

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my upcoming Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

#### TRIBUTE TO POPE JOHN PAUL II

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL).

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Arizona for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to pay tribute to the extraordinary life of Pope John Paul II. I served as an altar boy as a child, was educated by the Jesuit priests, and as a Roman Catholic I admired this man for his unwavering faith, extreme determination, and belief in the culture of life. His service to the Church and his dedication to freedom for all individuals are legacies the world will remember and honor for decades to come.

As the Holy Father once said, "Freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought."

Ten years ago, my wife, Linda, and I had the honor of a private audience with the Pope where we came to believe even more in his efforts to speak out strongly in favor of human rights as he stood firmly with the United States in defeating communism and spreading democracy across our globe.

This son of Poland served as a beacon of light to the world's oppressed and unborn. In life, as in death, the youth of the world loved this Pope. He too loved them and believed, "As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live."

His message on the sanctity of human life and social justice served as a rallying cry for millions looking for an advocate for the defenseless and the weak. He gave a voice to the silenced and provided hope to the hopeless.

Pope John Paul II appealed to the better nature of man. Humanity was well served by his Papacy. With his passing, let us celebrate his service to all mankind and listen quietly as the

angels in heaven sing in joy as he ascends to touch the face of God.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, we are here to honor the life and legacy of Pope John Paul II, and I am joined by several of our colleagues here tonight.

Mr. Speaker, we often get materials and letters from our constituencies, and sometimes even from other States. Although I represent Arizona, a close friend of mine from California, Kevin Rishell, wrote us a poem today related to Pope John Paul II, and it seemed appropriate to read. So I am going to start with that:

"Pope John Paul II.

A man of simple convictions,  
A man of great love and peace;  
A father to the nations,  
A friend now at last released.  
Into the arms of his beloved Savior;  
Into history,

With God's tender favor.  
'Well done' faithful servant,  
Echoes 'cross Heaven's portals;  
As John Paul is welcomed,  
By friends and other immortals.

His life was a service to God,  
And to his neighbors;  
To the weak and to the poor,  
And dearly loved unbelievers.

For he believed that all life,  
Had a godly purpose;  
That all life was special,  
And that God was never spurious.

For he understood clearly,  
The vain rantings of men;  
How popular their wisdom,  
Seemed to change with the wind.  
But he held true to his course,  
In the most turbulent times;  
With God's Word as his pilot,  
And the Holy Spirit as his guide.

In faith, he stood against evil,  
When it could have cost him his life;  
And for decades and more,  
He fought for what was right.

For God was his center,  
And Jesus was his friend;  
And the Comforter never left him,  
From birth to honored end.  
For he was on a holy quest,  
Of nearly mythic proportions;

A man with a great commission,  
Teaching truth and sacred traditions.  
He knew where he came from,  
And he knew where he would go;  
Secure in Christ, adored by the masses,  
This humble shepherd-soul,  
But now his journey's over,

A final appointment he will keep;  
A righteous servant to his Master,  
In whose arms he will now rest and sleep.  
While leaving a beautiful legacy,  
Of honor and valiant grace;

That will live on beyond this tribute,  
A priestly mantle so hard to replace.  
We will miss you Holy Father,  
We will miss your humor and your passion;  
We will miss your concern for personal details,  
And your courage to speak and to take action.

But now you have fought your good fight,  
And you have finished your race;  
We thank you for your example,  
And pray God bless you for your faith.  
Via con Dios, my precious brother,  
Go with God my blessed friend;  
Shalom to you my loving confessor,  
Be at peace and as you always said, 'Amen.'"

Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration and gratitude that I now personally rise to commend to the ages the life of Karol Wojtyla, Pope John Paul II.

Pope John Paul II lived an intentional life. Too often today, we spend our lives in a reactive state, with daily events and crises drowning out the reflection and study which are required to live an intentional life.

The Pope did not fall into this trap of the immediate. He instead considered his life's great questions and, after seeking guidance in Holy Scripture and through prayer, he steadfastly stayed wisdom's course.

Mr. Speaker, by now the narrative of the Pope's life has become well-known. Growing up in Poland, he had firsthand experience with two of the 20th century's most horrible totalitarian creations, that being Nazism and Soviet Communism. Living under these systems as a young man, he saw in detail not only the physical corrosion wrought by these systems of government, but the spiritual and social decay they engendered as well.

He looked beyond the jackboots and the tanks and saw that the real power of these regimes stemmed not from physical force, but from an intellectual climate that was stripping the humanity from humanity. Karol Wojtyla dedicated himself to fighting this evil, not with force of might, but through prayer, availing his heart, soul and mind unto God, and in serving his fellow human beings.

He exemplified what the Holy Scripture exhorts from man: "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God." He sought for justice to be done and the truth to be told by placing a handwritten acknowledgment of Christian sins against the Jewish people in a crevice of the Western Wall in Jerusalem, and in his admonishment of the kneeling Father Ernesto Cardenal, the Sandinista Culture Minister in Nicaragua.

He demonstrated mercy, and after recovering from his wounds from the assassination attempt on his life by Mehmet ali Agca, he visited this deranged Turk in prison. He visited him, and then he forgave him.

And he walked humbly, Mr. Speaker, allowing all of us to watch as he deteriorated physically right before our eyes, believing that those who follow Christ, as Christ himself taught, must sometimes endure suffering.

Karol Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II in 1978, and held the Chair of Saint Peter for more than 26 years. At the beginning of his Papacy, the totalitarianism that had colored his youth was on the march throughout the world. Previously free people were being enslaved by Soviet Communism with alarming regularity. However, the Soviet Union had reached its zenith, and soon would crumble, due in large