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## Now Pope John Paul Takes Up His Burden

BY FRANK MAUROVICH  
RNS Staff Writer

Pope John Paul I steps into the shoes of the fisherman as the 262nd successor of St. Peter with an almost universal consensus that his term, barring sudden curtailment by death, will be the most crucial in modern church history.



Analysis

A brief look at some of the major issues confronting the new Pope reveals only partially the awesome burden of his office: each of the issues has a built-in tension that precludes a simple solution. Among these issues are:

Healing the wounds of divisiveness within the Roman Catholic Church while at the same time moving the Church into the modern age. The very pace and content of that reform initiated by the Second Vatican Council (too slow and not enough for some, and too fast, too much for others) is the very cause of the current internal strife in the first place.

Promoting unity with other Christian churches that see a reformed papacy as the principal catalyst for ending

centuries-old divisions.

Alleviating the crisis of vocations to the ordained ministry while taking into account the Church's traditional posture on priestly celibacy and the role of women.

Implementing the Church's teaching on collegiality by sharing more decision-making authority with his brother bishops while preserving the singular impact and charism of the papacy.

Promoting Catholic participation in the defense of human rights, the Third World liberation struggle and world peace efforts without falling into the trap of partisan politics.

It is some consolation at least to Pope John Paul that he enters into office with the prayers of millions of people and with probably more advice than any other pope in history.

As with all modern popes before him, Cardinal Luciani, as an elector during the conclave, listened to the detailed analyses of the present condition of the Church and the world drawn up by Vatican experts. Those pre-election analyses fall within the conclave's secrecy restrictions, but it can be reasonably presumed that Pope Paul VI's internationalization of the Roman Curia and the Vatican diplomatic corps, the principal sources of the analyses, has given Pope John Paul a broader, more objective picture of the agenda facing the Church than his predecessors had at hand when they began their pontificates.

In addition, however, the Pope has received an unprecedented amount of unsought advice from a variety of other sources.

An American group, self-styled as the Committee for the Responsible Election of the Pope, came up with a papal profile that predicted success if the pontiff was holy, confident, trusting, joyful, able to identify priorities and willing to delegate authority.

An imposing international group of Catholic theologians advised him to shun a legalistic and authoritarian approach in favor of pastoral service to the Church and the world.

Even non-Catholic religious leaders got into the act.

Evangelist Billy Graham said the new Pope would lose a great deal of effectiveness unless he projected "a great deal of charism on television."

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, who must be gratified by the pontiff's choice of papal name, had reminded the cardinal-electors that Pope John XXIII was "the best Pope Jews ever had" and urged them to elect a man who combined the "impressive precedents" of John with the "best qualities" of Pope Paul VI.

Such an unprecedented flow of advice is less a mark of boldness than a remarkable recognition of the potential efficacy of the papacy within and outside the Catholic Church.



### Vintage

This unusual photograph shows Pope John Paul's father, center, in the uniform of an Alpine soldier with his sisters and the new Pope's grandparents in foreground. The photo was taken in Belluno, near the Pope's home village. The date is not known. (RNS)

## Pomp-Less Rite May Be Clue to New Pontificate

Vatican City (RNS) — The reason the installation ceremony of Pope John Paul I consisted of a simple Mass rather than the traditional coronation rites apparently reflected the wishes of the new pontiff himself.

And perhaps even the term pontiff may seem too pretentious for John Paul for the Vatican described the rite as "a solemn Mass ... beginning his ministry as supreme pastor" of the Church.

Reportedly the new Pope had asked that neither the word "coronation," nor

"enthronement" be used to describe the ceremony.

This is in keeping with the ceremonial when he became patriarch of Venice when he also avoided pomp in favor of simplicity.

His decision not to be crowned, not to receive a

tiara, was seen as an indication of the simplicity which many expect to mark his pontificate.

As patriarch of Venice, the then Cardinal Albino Luciani was noted for cutting out all ceremonial frills and devoting

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## Fr. Atwell Named To Ecumenism Post

Father Henry Atwell is back in the ecumenism field as an organizer, and he expects soon to call together a greatly expanded diocesan commission.

The Avon pastor, appointed last week as interim director of the Commission for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs, explained that the "interim" would begin with getting together a large group more representative of the people of

the whole diocese."

"Bishop Hogan wants this," he said, and "I think it is very significant that Pope John Paul in his very first statement spoke of continuing the ecumenical movement."

Father Atwell was executive director of Genesee Ecumenical Ministries for five years even while he was pastor at St. Agnes. He is a

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