

# Saint John Paul II

Hope, friendship, and courageous mercy

**Ages about 7-11** | Video 6:18 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

**Central truth** Friendship with Jesus can strengthen hope, service, and mercy through difficult times.

**Learning goals** Recall Karol's gifts and priestly service; connect hope with practical encouragement; distinguish forgiveness from allowing further harm.

**Gather** Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

**Watch online** [Open this video on Servus Dei](#)

## Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask who gives encouragement when a person feels afraid. Explain that courage can include naming fear and receiving help.

## Watch and notice

Notice soccer and theater, Karol's prayer, secret priestly studies, outdoor friendship with young people, and his forgiving visit after the attack.

## Talk together | 6-8 minutes

### 1. What gifts did Karol enjoy as a young person?

Sports, theater, friendship, and prayer. He later used his gifts to encourage people and share faith.

### 2. Why were his early seminary studies secret?

Nazi occupation made Church life dangerous. He began clandestine studies in 1942 and was ordained in 1946.

### 3. How did he accompany young people?

He listened, prayed, and spent time outdoors with them. Friendship helped people talk about faith and life.

### 4. Does forgiving mean ignoring danger?

No. Mercy can go with boundaries, justice, and telling a trusted adult. Children never need to return to an unsafe person.

**Then respond and pray** Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

# Lead the response

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**Short family lesson** Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

## Choose a handout

**Draw & Tell** Draw peaceful friendship and encouragement; avoid illustrating the attack.

**Read & Write** Connect gifts with friendship, recall listening, and explain safe mercy.

## Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: use a gentle summary and draw one encouraging action.

Ages 9-11: distinguish forgiving a wrong from excusing it or removing protective boundaries.

## An encouragement trail | Optional 4 minutes

Draw a trail with three stops: listen, offer hope, and help. Invent a safe example of a child nervous about joining a group. Write an encouraging sentence and one practical action that could support them.

**Look for understanding** Look for hope paired with help and safe boundaries. Do not equate ordinary fear with weak faith or require children to forgive publicly.

**Closing prayer** Jesus, stay with us when we are afraid. Help us listen, encourage, and show mercy with wise care. Saint John Paul II, pray for us. Amen.

**At home** Ask an adult about a gift you can use to encourage someone. Pray for people facing grief, violence, or illness.

**Handout answer notes** Gifts: sports, theater, outdoor activities. Accompaniment: listening, prayer, shared time. Safe mercy: boundaries, adult help, justice; no return to danger required.

## Teach with care

Preview family deaths, wartime occupation, the assassination attempt, and later illness. Invite children to pass on a question and seek trusted adult support. The video compresses Nazi occupation, postwar life, and priestly formation. Secret seminary studies began during the war, not only afterward. The appeal to open doors to Christ belongs to his inaugural homily. Forgiving the attacker did not remove justice or safety; no child should be pressured to reconcile with someone unsafe.

**Words to explain** Seminary: preparation for the priesthood. Pope: the Bishop of Rome who serves the Church. Forgiveness: releasing hatred and choosing mercy while seeking justice and safety.

## Sources for the leader

Story source: [Servus Dei video and English transcript](#)

Vatican biography: [John Paul II: biographical profile](#)

# Walk with hope

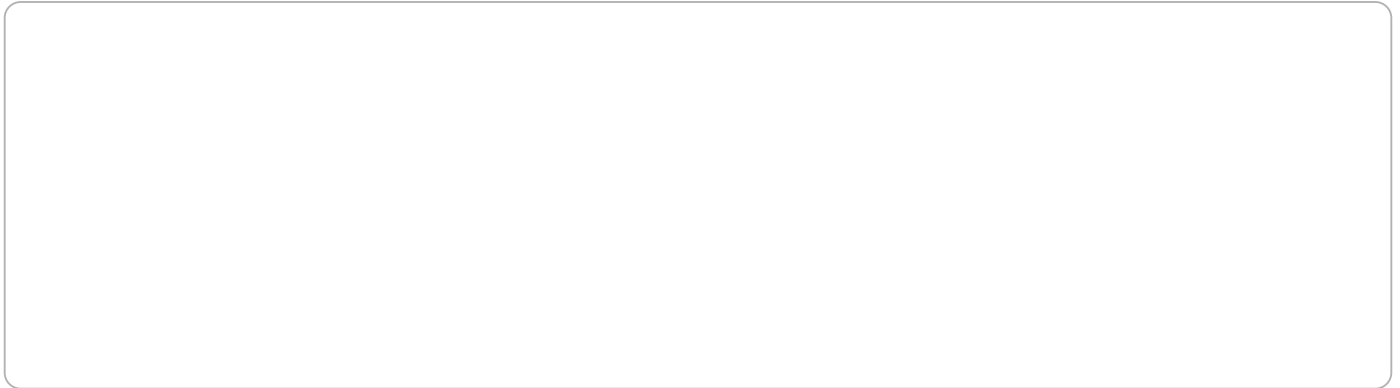
Saint John Paul II

John Paul II encouraged people through prayer, friendship, and mercy.

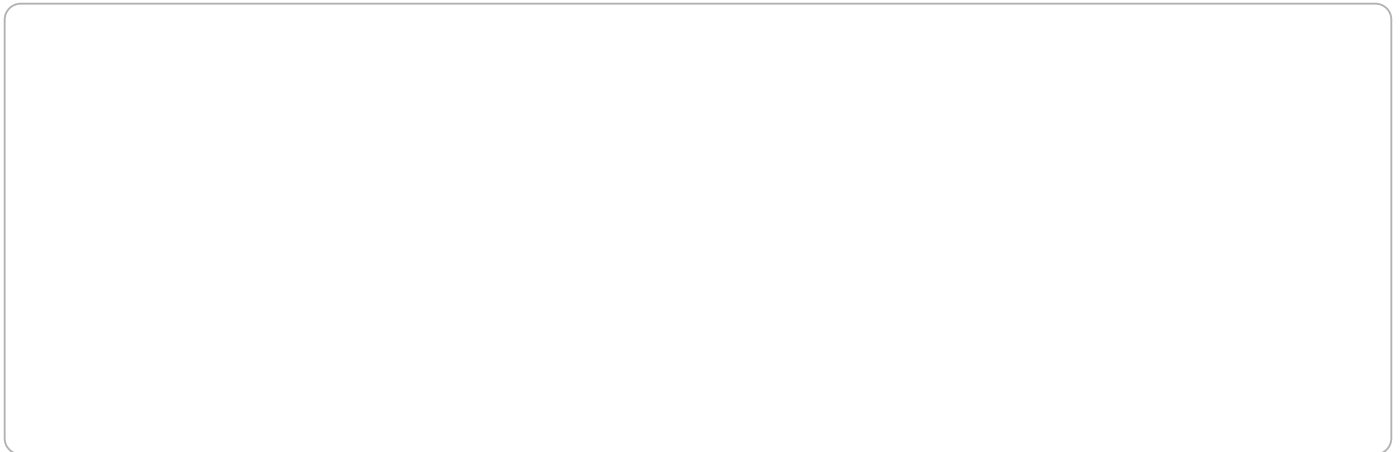
Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult helper** Read aloud. Invite drawing, pointing, or spoken answers. Writing is optional.

**1 Draw Karol sharing a peaceful outdoor activity with friends.**



**2 Draw a safe way to encourage someone who feels nervous.**



**Tell** What kind words and practical help could you offer?

**Pray** Jesus, help me give hope and seek wise help. Amen.

**At home** Share your picture and one thing you learned about God or following Jesus.

# Gifts that encourage

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Remember Karol's gifts and think about hope with care.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 Recall his gifts

Name one activity Karol enjoyed and a way it could build friendship.

*He enjoyed ...*

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## 2 Name accompaniment

How did he help young people explore faith?

*He helped by ...*

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## 3 Explain safe mercy

How can forgiveness and seeking safety belong together?

*Mercy can include ...*

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**Pray** Jesus, help me give hope and seek wise help. Amen.

**Go deeper** Why can listening be an important way to give another person hope?