

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 25 (1963)
Heft: [6]

Artikel: Pope John XXIII
Autor: W.R.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942370>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 16.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

Pope John

XXIII

?

"What matters to me is the effort of finding a little of the good side."—Pope John. (Oct. 17, 1938, in reference to persons and things at Athens while he was Apostolic Delegate.)

When historians write about great men of the 20th Century they will have an impressive number of personalities to consider — men who are known for their deeds in two world wars; dictators who not only managed to hold millions of their subjects and indeed the whole world at ransom; men who are famous for unbelievable scientific discoveries and achievements. However, how famous or infamous they may be, they will have to put on a pedestal the little, humble Champion of Peace and Goodwill — our beloved Pope John XXIII.

Pope John was born of peasant parents in northern Italy, not far from the Swiss border, and his desire in life was to be just a humble parish Priest. However, Destiny wanted more of him and he rose to the call to the Supreme Office of the Church with a simple desire to unite the peoples of the world under the slogan of peace on earth and goodwill toward all men. When he then called an Ecumenical Council in order to modernise the Church in pursuing this aim and when he told world leaders at a critical moment to face squarely "their tremendous responsibilities before the tribunal of History and the judgment seat of God" the world started to look up to him. The most significant fact about Pope John is that he was better known amongst other denominations than the Catholic Church, who took him more or less for granted.

The universal desire for the truth and love for one another has appealed to each race, colour and creed and mankind has seen in him the light to a better united world. It seems a great pity that he could not guide the Ecumenical Council to a successful conclusion and that his great influence with the leaders of the world should have been interrupted. But the weight and sanctity of his convictions will continue to exercise an impact.

"In any event," writes Walter Lippman in the Weekly News, "the modernising movement can perhaps be arrested, but it cannot for long be turned back. For what Pope John began will have very big consequences, and the History of our world will be different because he lived."

—W.R.