

## THE DEATH OF A GIANT; A LOSS FOR ALL OF US

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PINE BLUFFS –

“If only he had allowed priests to marry . . .”

“He should have permitted women to be ordained . . .”

“If he’d just changed Church teaching regarding birth control . . .”

“Why was he so opposed to abortion and euthanasia?”

So the secular pundits of the major media have lamented since the death, last week, of Pope John Paul II. Watching the great outpouring of sympathy and respect for him from all over the world, they seem baffled. “Surely, this man was behind the times,” is their prevailing opinion, while, in deference to Christians generally and Catholics in particular, they strive to muffle temporarily their criticism.

But most world leaders and common people understand. They feel an intense sense of loss for a man recognized as one who, with his highly defined sense of morality, influenced his world for the better. His stand against Communism hastened its demise as a political system which stifled human freedom. His criticism of Capitalism, while recognizing that it encourages individual freedom, showed his disdain for excessive materialism and the rise of secularism.

On Friday, dignitaries and ordinary people will arrive in Rome a million strong from all corners of the globe to pay their last respects to one who had no equal. The

major media? They'll go on as before, attempting to tell the Roman Catholic Church, an organization which has been around for 2000 years, what it's next Pope should do to "bring the Church into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Witnessing the decline of many institutions which have embraced the culture of their times, they fail to understand that character counts, that rules are important in a well-ordered society, and that moral values play a large role in the well-lived life. Their organizations, like so many others which have embraced declining morality in a quest for "a share of the market," will sink into mediocrity, become irrelevant and disappear without a trace and with no regrets.

Meanwhile, Christianity generally and the Roman Catholic Church specifically, will continue to grow as people everywhere seek to live more meaningful lives in a closer relationship with God and Jesus Christ.

"May his soul,  
And all the souls  
Of the faithful departed,  
Rest in peace! Amen."