

Pope John XXIII: Donated “in gratitude for the blessings of the Second Vatican Council” by John and Fran Amer, this window depicts the beloved pope who called for the Second Vatican Council. He was born Angelo Roncalli on November 25, 1881 in Sotto il Monte, Italy, ordained a priest in 1904, made a cardinal in 1953, and elected pope after the death of Pius XII in 1958. On Christmas Day of that year, he became the first pope since 1870 to make pastoral visits in the Diocese of Rome, when he visited the sick at both the Bambin Gesù Hospital (a facility for sick children) and the Santo Spirito Hospital. The next day, when he visited prisoners at the Regina Coeli Prison, he told the prisoners, "You could not come to me, so I came to you." Few people expected this elderly man to do much, and many were surprised when he called the Second Vatican Council, almost one hundred years after the First Vatican Council. John XXIII invited Eastern Orthodox and Protestant observers to the Council and worked to improve relations between Christians and Jews. Within the memory of many of our parishioners, the Council produced sixteen documents, on a variety of subjects including the liturgy, divine revelation, the role of bishops, ecumenism, religious freedom, the role of the laity, and the Church in the modern world. When John XXIII died in 1963, the Council was still in session; its work was completed by Pope Paul VI. One of the most popular popes in the history of the papacy, John XXIII was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2000. Pope John was canonized on April 27, 2014, by Pope Francis. We celebrate his feast on October 11, the opening day of the Second Vatican Council.

