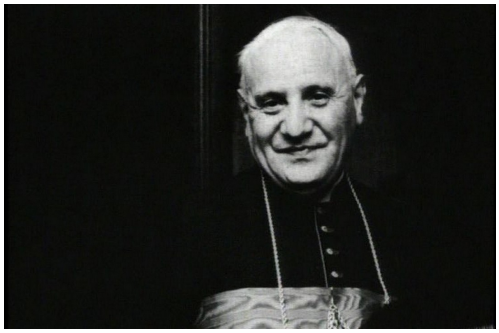

JOHN XXIII

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John XXIII's reign only lasted five years: from 1958 to 1963. The son of a peasant family, he was neither high spirited or a born leader, nor was he a progressive man. Fallen into disgrace with the Vatican, a much critisized ex-Nuncio in Paris, his early career was not exactly outstanding. However, in 1958, he surprised everyone when he suggested a world Council that would be in charge of the Church's « aggiornamento ». His death in 1963, just a few months after the actual opening of the Council, caused great emotion all over the world, even those not of Christian faith or from Communist countries mourned him.

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