

A Special Papal Blessing – April 2, 2005
John and Patty Vavrek, Oak Park, MI

When Pope John Paul II came to Detroit in 1987, we all got up VERY early and caught a shuttle bus to Hamtramck. Our two sons had the flu, so my mother came to stay with them while our friends Pat and Bob Clark, their children Jackie and Darren, and my husband John and I went. We sat on the curb at Joseph Campau since before sun-up waiting for him to drive by. He went by in the "pope mobile" and on to speak to us all. We stayed for a while, but since we had been there so early, we all started the long trek back for the bus area. We knew the Pope was leaving the area because the helicopters started flying overhead, but we really didn't think he would be coming down the street we were walking on alone. We had reached the bus area, just by the railroad tracks, and were talking with our bus driver when we noticed police cars and, all of a sudden, the Pope! The seven of us were the only ones standing there. The "pope-mobile" had to slow down to almost a stop to cross the tracks; he looked directly at us, smiled and blessed us. There was such a wonderful feeling, the seven of us had a combination of crying and laughing, and one big group hug! To this day, I think about it and get both chills and just a wonderful peace and always a smile and happy tears. He truly was a living example of God's love.