

**Mystical Effects in the Presence of John Paul the Great – April 4, 2005**  
**Christine Vertrees, St. Rene Goupil, Sterling Heights**

The Holy Father will always have a special place in my heart. He is the reason I converted to Catholicism in 1981. When Pope Paul VI died, I was going through a rough time. I remember being struck by the piety of the people as they filed past to pay their respects in the rain. When John Paul I was elected, I watched everything he did and was heartbroken when he died. I cried for him like I'd never cried for family members that had died. I thought about going to Mass and seeing what Catholicism was all about, but it wasn't until John Paul II was elected Pope that I finally got the courage to go and eventually become Catholic. He has had a profound influence on my life and I am deeply saddened at his passing.