

John Paul II's feast day will be October 22, Vatican says

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April 12, 2011

Rome, April 12 (ENInews)--The late Pope John Paul II's feast day, or day of commemoration, will be October 22, the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments announced in the official Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano.

Generally, a feast day is announced once a person is beatified -- given the title "Blessed" - which is the last step before sainthood. John Paul will be beatified in Rome on 1 May, however, the Vatican did not give an explanation for the early announcement.

John Paul's feast day is the anniversary of his inauguration as pope in 1978 and may be celebrated in Rome and in the dioceses of his native country of Poland, the Vatican said.

The Vatican also said that churches throughout the world may celebrate a special mass in thanksgiving of John Paul's beatification within one year after 1 May. Usually, thanksgiving masses for beatifications are limited to areas where the beatified person worked or lived. John Paul, who died in 2005, was one of the most widely-traveled pontiffs, visiting 129 countries during his 27-year reign.