

Did You Know...

✝ News and trivia from our parish and the Catholic Church ✝
-- contributed by the Christ Child Church Women's Club --

Christ Child Catholic Church

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Is being the Pope hazardous duty?

These days, heads of state -- including His Holiness -- typically ride around in bullet-proof and bomb-proof limos, just as a matter of prudence.

So it was quite newsworthy (2015) when Pope Francis toodled about in a relatively cheap, and vulnerable, Fiat sedan. Many were the remarks and comments about how, in today's fractured world, he was putting himself at extreme risk.



Well, the modern risks are certainly undeniable, and the Pope's courage is commendable. But is this situation really a product only of contemporary world violence? In fact, it is not.... not even close.

"Way back when", the position of Pope could be argued as being more dangerous than a front-line soldier in one of the many on-going wars. Over the course of time, there have been at least 30 men who have met untimely (and at times gruesome) deaths due to their calling. Five Popes were murdered just in the 10th century alone.

Popes would routinely take up residence in fortified compounds (e.g., Avignon), and were protected by the Swiss Guard.



In short, the head of the Catholic Church occupies, and has always occupied, a precarious position. Feelings and emotions run high about many topics with which the Church must deal daily. Stern speech and heavy rhetoric is always to be expected; but such fervence also can sometimes result in extreme, violent behavior.

Simply put, today is not hugely different. Yes, the Pope surely has a better chance of survival nowadays than in yesteryear; but in any analysis, he's still a target.

It's easy to forget the level of sacrifice, and risk, to which the Holy Father has committed his life. Let's take a few moments now and then, and, as we do with our friends and loved ones, send some prayers and good wishes his way. It may be a powerful life, but it's not an easy one.

Still Curious? See these links ---

[The dangerous life of a Pope](#)

[Pope's new "limo" -- a Fiat](#)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_popes_who_died_violently

--- *Karin and Greg Illes*

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<http://christchild.org/did-you-know-articles>