

21/3/1959

POPE JOHN RECEIVES 4.000 SICK AND INJURED

Pope John XXIII on his saint's feast day had one of the busiest times of his young pontificate.

The 19th March was St. Joseph's Day, and in Italy that was a national holiday. It was a time for Roman Catholics named Joseph, Giuseppe in Italian, to celebrate their saint's day. And before he was elected Pope, the 77-year-old Pontiff was a Joseph: Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli.

Presumably he watched himself on television as the Italian state network presented a 45-minute evening program entitled "The Pope's Day".

He started his busy day by celebrating mass for 6000 street cleaners of Rome. Then he appeared at the window of his Vatican apartment at noon and gave his blessing to 8,000 tourists and pilgrims in St. Peter's Square.

The coverage shows a part of his busy holiday, when he received more than 4,000 sick and injured in a general audience in St. Peter's Basilica, and gave his blessing to those present and to all the world's ailing and injured.