

# Would-be assassin of Pope John Paul II says he wants to be baptized

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Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who attempted to assassinate Pope John Paul II, now claims he would like to convert to Christianity after his release from prison. He says he wants to be baptized in a ceremony at the Vatican.

Agca shot and seriously wounded John Paul II in St. Peter's Square on May 13, 1981. In 1983, the Pope met with his would-be assassin in an Italian prison and forgave him.

Now serving a prison term for killing a Turkish journalist, Agca has made frequent claims that he is the Messiah or Jesus Christ, the Associated Press reports. This has raised questions about his mental health and also sparked speculations he has converted to Christianity.

"Agca is not formally a Christian," lawyer Haci Ali Ozhan told the Associated Press. "When he converts, he would like a baptism ceremony at the Vatican," Ozhan.

He is scheduled for release on January 18, 2010.

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/new.php?n=15995>