

# Short Biography of John F. Kennedy

John Fitzgerald “Jack” Kennedy (May 29, 1917 –November 22, 1963), often referred to by his initials JFK, was the 35<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, serving from 1961 until his assassination in 1963.

After Kennedy’s military service as commander of the Motor Torpedo Boat PT-109 during World War II in the South Pacific, his aspirations turned political. With the encouragement and grooming of his father, Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr. Kennedy represented Massachusetts’s 11<sup>th</sup> congressional district in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1947 to 1953 as a Democrat and served in the U.S Senate from 1953 until 1960. Kennedy defeated then Vice President and Republican candidate Richard Nixon in the 1960 U.S. Presidential election, one of the closest in American history. He was the second-youngest President (after Theodore Roosevelt), the first President born in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the youngest elected to the office, at the age of 43. Kennedy is the first and only Catholic and the first Irish American President and is the only president to have won a Pulitzer Prize.