

The Road to the Beatification of the Martin Parents

After the canonization of Thérèse, in 1925, at Lisieux, Cardinal Vico, who had come to Lisieux, stated: "Well then! Rome now asks us to consider Papa!" Having just finished the cause of Thérèse, the Carmel was somewhat reluctant. But, in fact, Louis Martin's reputation of holiness was apparent to readers of *Story of a Soul*, written by Thérèse. That of Zélie developed much later, when *Story of a Family* was published in 1946 (by Father Piat, a Franciscan), and it became better known with the publication of *Correspondance familiale*, which offered the reader 218 letters of Zélie and 16 of Louis.

An Abundance of Graces

Since February 1958, the journal *Annals of St. Thérèse of Lisieux* (now called *Thérèse of Lisieux*) has been publishing those graces and favors attributed to one or the other.

A Halo for Two . . .

On March 22, 1957, the process to consider Louis Martin began in Bayeux. It lasted 12 years and was completed on February 12, 1969. Meanwhile, the Diocese of Sées considered Zélie Martin from October 10, 1957 to January 21, 1959.

For the first time in the history of the Church, Pope Paul VI wanted the two processes combined into one, and in 1971 this one cause was entrusted to the Historical Office of the Congregation for Saints.

After the hearing, the commission reached a positive decision about the case on February 17, 1988. On December 20, 1993, the theological consultants gave a favorable opinion, so good that Louis and Zélie Martin were declared "venerable" by John Paul II on March 26, 1994, the *Year of the Family*.

The miracle required for them to be recognized as "Blessed" ...

The bodies of Louis and Zélie, resting since October 13, 1958 at the cemetery of Lisieux near the apse of the Basilica, were exhumed on May 26, 2008 to be placed in the crypt of the Basilica where they can be venerated.

In 1991, two volumes were published about the virtues of Louis Martin and Marie-Azélie Guérin.

- Volume 1, 690 pages, on the heroic virtues of the Servants of God.
- Volume 2, 1251 pages, bringing together all the documentation available.

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