

What is a **Beatification**?

Why a beatification?

Beatification is an act by which the Pope appoints a person to the status of "blessed" (in Latin: beati). The Church wants to offer as an example to all Christian people the testimony of certain members, and the Church designates them as Servants of God.

A rigorous procedure

Beatification is decided only by a rigorous procedure. It takes place in two stages:

1. Recognition of the Servant of God's reputation for holiness: displaying a lifetime of Christian virtue one's whole life, at the moment of one's death, with a reputation for holiness that endures after one's death.

The diocesan bishop conducts a thorough investigation. He assigns a postulator of the cause to carefully collect testimony of witnesses and to examine writings. A dossier is sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome, which considers each element of the record with the help of the commissioned reporters and consultants (historians, theologians). At the end of this first stage, the Servant of God is declared "venerable."

During this procedure, the promoter of the faith serves as an attorney general whose mission is to ensure that nothing in the life of the Servant of God is left in the shadows, including anything that might be unfavorable to this cause. (The term "devil's advocate" was applied to him, and now this term is commonly used).

2. To be declared beatified, the Church requires fulfillment of a miracle that takes place as a result of prayer addressed to the Servant of God.

Indeed, many of the faithful will seek graces and favors from God through the intercession of the Servant of God. Another canonical survey is conducted, examining medical records, listening to testimony and expert reports, and consulting doctors and theologians. Everything is subject to a plenary meeting of cardinals and bishops, which decides whether to refer the findings to the Pope, who ultimately decides. If he decides in favor, a decree of beatification is drafted, which will be solemnly proclaimed at the site where the request originated.

Beatification allows for official prayer within the diocese, and recognizes the feast of the Beatified on the official calendar. This public cult also allows the display of images and relics in churches. Furthermore, the Beatified may be taken as a patron (of persons, of a parish, etc.).