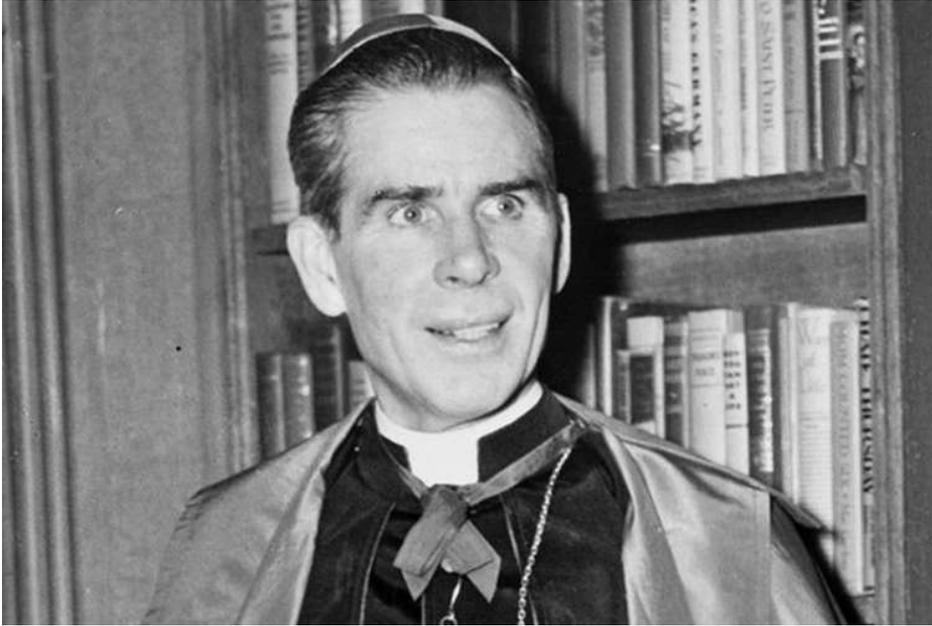


Archbishop Fulton Sheen to be beatified



Pope Francis approved the miracle attributed to Archbishop Fulton Sheen Friday, making possible the American television catechist's beatification.

The Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints promulgated the decree approving Sheen's miracle on July 6.

The miracle involves the unexplained recovery of James Fulton Engstrom, a boy born apparently stillborn in September 2010 to Bonnie and Travis Engstrom of the Peoria-area town of Goodfield. He showed no signs of life as medical professionals tried to revive him. The child's mother and father prayed to Archbishop Sheen to heal their son.

A seven-member panel of medical experts advising the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints gave unanimous approval of the miracle attributed to the famous television personality and evangelist in March 2014.

Archbishop Sheen was a beloved television catechist during the 1950s and 60s in the United States. His Emmy-award winning television show "Life is Worth Living" reached an audience of millions.

Sheen was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois at the age of 24, and was appointed auxiliary bishop of New York in 1951, where he remained until his appointment as

Bishop of Rochester, New York in 1966. He retired in 1969 and moved back to New York City until his death in 1979.

On June 27, Sheen's remains were transferred from the Archdiocese of New York to Peoria, Illinois following a long legal battle over the late archbishop's burial place that had put Sheen's sainthood cause on hold.

The Peoria Diocese opened the cause for Sheen's canonization in 2002, after Archdiocese of New York said it would not explore the case. In 2012, Benedict XVI recognized the heroic virtues of the archbishop.

In September 2014, Bishop Daniel Jenky of Peoria suspended Sheen's cause on the grounds that the Holy See expected Sheen's remains to be in the Peoria diocese.

Fulton Sheen's niece Joan Cunningham filed a legal complaint in 2016 seeking to have her uncle's remains moved to the Cathedral of St. Mary in Peoria. The Archdiocese of New York repeatedly appealed the attempt to transfer Sheen's remains to Peoria.

On June 7, the New York Court of Appeals denied further appeal of the New York Supreme Court decision upholding Cunningham's petition and later that month Sheen's remains were moved to Peoria.

No date has been given for Sheen's beatification. Another recognized miracle attributed to Sheen would lead to his canonization as a saint.

Along with Fulton Sheen, the Vatican Congregation of the Causes of Saints also recognized the heroic virtues of seven Servants of God:

Lebanese Patriarch of Antioch of the Maronites Elia Hoyek (1843-1931); Italian Archbishop Giovanni Vittorio Ferro of Reggio Calabria-Bova (1901-1992); Spanish founder of the Institute of Missionaries of Charity Ángel Riesco Carbajo (1902-1972); Polish Father Ladislao Kornilowicz, a diocesan priest (1884-1946); Italian Franciscan Father Angelico Lipani (1842-1920); Filipino foundress of the Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena Francisca del Espíritu Santo (1647-1711); and the French lay founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of Maternal Charity Etienne-Pierre Morlanne (1772-1862).

Pope Francis also approved the equipollent canonization of Blessed Bartholomew of the Martyrs, the 16th-century Portuguese Dominican Archbishop of Braga, inscribing him in the book of saints.