

(On Thursday, April 3, 2014, Pope Francis authorized the Congregation of Saints in Rome to recognize that Fr. Marie-Clément Staub lived a life of 'heroic virtue' and can now be considered "Venerable", a further step in the canonization process. A French priest of the Assumptionist Order who was sent to mission in Canada, he saw a need to provide the Canadian seminaries and religious educational facilities with a support staff of nuns who would work to assist these institutions through charitable service and prayer. Hence, he founded the congregation of female religious known as the “Sisters of St. Joan of Arc” to accomplish his vision. He died in Quebec in 1936 and his Cause was initiated by that diocese. He was declared a Servant of God in 1986. Read full article below from the Catholic News Service on Pope Francis' decisions.)

VATICAN CITY - Without a canonization ceremony, Pope Francis declared three new saints for the Americas, pioneers of the Catholic Church in Canada and Brazil.

Pope Francis signed decrees April 3 recognizing: St. Marie de l'Incarnation, a French Ursuline who travelled to Quebec in 1639 and is known as the Mother of the Canadian Church; St. Francois de Laval, who arrived in Quebec 20 years after St. Marie de l'Incarnation and became the first bishop of Quebec; and St. Jose de Anchieta, a Spanish-born Jesuit who traveled to Brazil in 1553 and became known as the Apostle of Brazil.

In declaring the three saints, the Pope used a procedure known as "equivalent canonizations," which required a thorough study of the candidates' life and writings, fame of holiness and reports of favours granted through their intercession. Unlike a regular sainthood process, though, it did not require the verification of a miracle through their intercession, nor further studies by historians and theologians working for the Congregation for Saints' Causes.

The three were beatified together by Pope John Paul II in 1980.

"It is with great joy and thanksgiving that the bishops of Canada welcome today's proclamation by Pope Francis that the Universal Church recognizes Bishop François de Laval and Mother Marie of the Incarnation as saints," said the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops in a news release after the Pope signed the decrees.

"Late last year, the Holy Father had consulted the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops about his proposal to proceed with their canonization. We responded then, and we do again today, with a resounding Amen! We are grateful to God for raising up in our midst these two wonderful examples of holiness and service. We thank Pope Francis for this great gift to the Church in Canada, and to all the people of our nation."

The bishops of Quebec have said they will celebrate a thanksgiving Mass May 18 in Quebec and hope to have a larger celebration with the Pope in Rome in October. The Brazilian bishops, who thought the decrees would be signed April 2 and planned local celebrations for that evening, have said they will celebrate a Mass of thanksgiving with Pope Francis April 24 in Rome's Church of St. Ignatius.

St. Francois de Laval was born in 1623, studied in a Jesuit school, then joined a group of youths who formed what would become the Seminary of Foreign Missions. Ordained to the priesthood in 1647, he eventually was appointed apostolic vicar of New France, as Quebec was called, and ordained a bishop in 1658. He landed in Quebec — a town of just 500 people — the following June and began his missionary work among colonists and the native peoples. He died in Quebec in 1708.

St. Marie de l'Incarnation was born in 1599 and although drawn to the religious life, she followed her parents' wishes and was married at the age of 17. Six months after her son was born, her husband died. When the child turned 12, she entered the Ursuline order and, in 1639, set sail for Quebec with several other Ursulines. She died in Quebec in 1672.

St. Jose de Anchieta, was born in the Canary Islands in 1534 and joined the Jesuits at the age of 17. He was sent to Brazil, mainly for his health, but immediately dedicated himself to missionary work, learning the local languages and writing a grammar and dictionary used by

Portuguese settlers and missionaries. He was ordained to the priesthood only after he had been in Brazil several years. He is credited with being one of the founders of Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro. He died in 1597 in Reritigba, the city now known as Anchieta.

In addition to the three "equivalent canonizations" April 3, Pope Francis signed decrees recognizing the miracles needed for the future canonizations of Blesseds Giovanni Antonio Farina, the Italian founder of the Teaching Sisters of St. Dorothy; Kuriakose Elias Chavara, the Indian founder of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate, a Syro-Malabar Catholic order; Nicholas of Longobardi, an Italian Oblate priest; and Euphrasia Eluvathingal, an Indian Carmelite sister and member of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church.

He also recognized the miracle needed for the beatification of Brother Luigi Bordino, an Italian member of the Brothers of St. Joseph Cottolegno, who died in 1977.

Pope Francis also declared eight men and women "venerable," recognizing they lived the Christian virtues in a heroic way. The eight included three Italians, three Spaniards, a Brazilian and **Assumptionist Father Marie-Clement Staub, who was born in France and sent to the United States in 1909. At Assumption College in Worcester, Mass., he founded the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc in 1914. He died in Quebec in 1936.**