

Assumptionists Organize groups to Attend Beatification Ceremonies for Servant of God Pope John Paul II

At the end of April, 2011 the Assumptionists and other members of the Assumption Family in France will be leading various groups to the beatification celebration of Pope John Paul II. It is their hope, in a special way, to attract large groups of students and young professionals. "The beatification is an event that will be recorded in the annals of history" observed group leader, Fr. Vincent Cabanac, AA. The actual ceremony will take place on May 1, 2011 the Sunday after Easter.

The healing of a French nun with Parkinson's disease is to go down in history as the miracle that made John Paul II a "blessed." The title is given to martyrs and other Christians to whom a miracle has been officially attributed, thus bringing them one step closer to sainthood.

John Paul II's cause arrived in the current's Pope's hands for approval after doctors studied the miraculous healing of Sister Marie Simon Pierre Normand and concluded it was "scientifically unexplainable." Following approval from theologians and Church officials, Pope Benedict promulgated the decree with his signature.

Pope John Paul II's cause is extraordinary in the history of the Church both for the speed with which it was advanced to beatification and because it will be his immediate successor to preside over the ceremony.

The Pope's cause was brought to beatification in just over five years, rivaling that of his good friend Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta for its speed.

His beatification will be celebrated by Pope Benedict XVI in St. Peter's Square on May 1, 2011 the first Sunday after Easter.



The choice of May 1 is full of significance for the late-Pope, who died just a day before the celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday in 2005. That year, it fell on April 3. The date changes from year-to-year, but is always the first Sunday after Easter. For those who followed John Paul II's pontificate, it is a special Sunday. The day was particularly important to the late-pontiff because it was the day in 2000 that he celebrated the canonization of St. Faustina Kowalska and declared that the Sunday after Easter should henceforth be known as "Divine Mercy Sunday."Divine Mercy is "absolutely fundamental" to the pontificate of John Paul II. "It's precisely the vision, we could say, of the pontificate of John Paul II that has this theme of the Divine Mercy," Fr. Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman said.

The staff at St. Peter's Basilica is already preparing for what is sure to be a grand occasion, drawing pilgrims from all over the globe. Workers are already cleaning the mosaics in the Chapel of St. Sebastian, just next to Michelangelo's Pietà, where the soon-to-be "blessed's" body will lie.

John Paul II's body will be taken from the crypt below and set below the chapel's altar.