

Vatican: Beatification of John Paul II progresses

Religion



Vatican City, 16 Dec. (AKI) - Pope Benedict XVI on Saturday is expected to authorise a decree which would pave the way for the beatification of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II, who died in 2005. The decision would move the pontiff one step closer to canonisation and full sainthood.

The pontiff is due to receive the prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Angelo Amato, who will ask Benedict for final approval regarding decrees for the 'heroic virtues' and the miracles of 'God's servants', a decisive move in the process of beatification.

'God's servants' refers to John Paul II and Jerzy Popieluszko, a Polish priest who was kidnapped, tortured and assassinated by Poland's communist regime in 1984.

John Paul II had prayed at his tomb several times.

Because Popieluszko's case is considered 'martyrdom', there is no need for recognising a miracle by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Officials in the Polish capital Warsaw are already planning a ceremony for Popieluszko in June 2010.

For John Paul II, however, there still needs to be approval of a "miracle" which should be approved in the next months.

The late pope is believed to have performed a miracle when he cured a French nun of Parkinson's disease in 2005.

Pope John Paul II (photo) died on 2 April 2005. Moves to beatify him received a boost when Benedict waived the usual five year waiting period for him in May 2005.

There is speculation his beatification will be approved in Rome in October 2010.

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