

STEPS TO SAINTHOOD

1 SERVANT OF GOD

This process usually begins at least five years after a person's death, but some exceptions can be made by the pope.



The local bishop opens a **cause** or case for the person's sainthood that examines the life and writings of the candidate.

Evidence that shows the candidate lived a holy life is gathered and submitted in a special report called a **positio** to the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints.



VENERABLE 2

The report is reviewed by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome.

If the committee and the Pope agree that the candidate did indeed live a life of virtue, the candidate is then given the title of **Venerable**. This means that this person is worthy of our respect because of her or his noble character.

3 BLESSED

All **martyrs** (those who died in the name of our faith) can be automatically beatified as a miracle of grace.



The next stage is called beatification. When someone is beatified, we call them 'blessed.'

For anyone else to be beatified, proof is usually required to show that the candidate caused a miracle to happen. A scientific commission must determine that the miracle cannot be attributed to a natural cause.

Miracles are considered proof that the candidate is truly in heaven with God.



Canonization does not "make" a person a saint. It merely recognizes what God has already done.

SAINT 4

In the final stage, there must usually be proof of a second miracle traced to the blessed person's intercession.



The Pope can then canonize the candidate as a person who is with God and worthy of universal veneration by the Church.

A special ceremony is held to celebrate the declaration of this holy person as a saint.

