



From Deacon Mark Miller's Desk

It's been a busy summer for the Vatican offices involved with the research and naming of saints. There are four steps on the path to sainthood; each requires careful and extensive research, fact-gathering and checking, and personal testimony. The steps are:

Servant of God – verifies that the candidate has a reputation of holiness; all the candidate's writing and writing about them – both pro and con – is examined.

Venerable – the title of a candidate who "exemplified the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance."

Blessed – there are two routes to beatification: Pope declares the candidate is a martyr or proof of a miracle caused by the candidate's intercession.

Saint – requires a second miracle that occurs after being named blessed. God performs the miracle; it's attributed to the candidate's intercession. Pope Francis has advanced the causes of several candidates this summer.

Blessed Father Placido Cortese, an Italian Franciscan, was tortured and killed by the Nazis. Before the war, he edited a Catholic publication. That same printing press was used to make false documents for Jews and Allied servicemen. He was part of an underground network that helped Jews and British prisoners of war escape Nazi-controlled Italy. He used his church's confessional to coordinate both the underground and resistance fighters.

Servant of God Enrica Beltrame Quattrocchi, was an Italian laywoman who died in 2012. She was a high school teacher, a volunteer caring for the poor, and her parent's caretaker. She faithfully attended daily Mass in spite of her own health issues and economic hardships.

Servant of God Maria Cristina Cella Mocellin would not allow chemotherapy treatment for her cancer while she was pregnant. Her son

was born in 1994, and she immediately began cancer treatment. It was too late however, and she passed away in October 1995 at the age of 26. She sacrificed her life for that of her unborn son.

Venerable Pope John Paul I served as pope for just 33 days in 1978. He's expected to be named blessed this October after the cure in 2011 of an Argentinian girl was declared a miracle earlier this year.

Blessed Titus Brandsma was a Dutch Carmelite priest and scholar. When Adolph Hitler came into power in 1932, Father Brandsma began lecturing, preaching, and writing against Nazism. as president of the Catholic Schools organization, he told the church's schools to defy Nazi orders to expel Jewish students and to deny them access to school records of Jewish students. He was an advisor to Holland's Catholic media and urged them to re-enforce traditional Catholic faith and morals. The Nazis arrested him in January of 1942. After his initial torture and interrogation, Fr. Brandsma was sent to Dachau where he was killed by lethal injection July 26th, 1942.

Servants of God Józef and Wiktoria Ulma and their seven children [including one unborn] lived in Nazi-occupied southeast Poland. They provided shelter and safe harbor for Jewish residents of the area. On March 24th, a Nazi patrol confronted the Ulma's and executed the eight Jewish people living in their home. The Nazis then turned their attention to the parents, then their six children [aged eight through two]. Wiktoria went into labor as she lay dying.

And finally, the sainthood cause for Stefania Łąckais just beginning. Stephania was a Polish Catholic who worked for her diocese's newspaper. After Germany invaded Poland in 1939, the paper's entire staff volunteered its skills to the Polish underground. The entire team was arrested in April 1941. After being interrogated and tortured by the Gestapo, she was sent to Auschwitz. By 1943 she was working in the camp hospital as a nurse. Proficient in German, she worked tirelessly on behalf of her parents. She baptized newborns and stayed with the dying. She crossed out inmates names on the death roster. She wrote a camp prayerbook that survives to this day. Her fellow prisoners called her the 'earthly guardian angel.'"

