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The cause of canonization of Josemaria Escriva

About recent media reports
referring to the cause of
canonization of Opus Dei's
founder, Josemaria Escriva

11/13/2001

On September 29 an Italian television news program referred to the cause of canonization of Josemaria Escriva, stating that a gathering of cardinals had approved a miracle. The journalist said that the information

came from sources unrelated to the prelate.

When some journalists asked him about it the same day, the cause's Postulator, Monsignor Flavio Capucci declared: "I don't know whether the meeting of cardinals has taken place. In any case, the Congregation, in examining miracles, merely makes a recommendation. The Holy Father has the last word, and his decision is made public only when the relevant decree is read. Until then, one can only wait."

On October 4 a daily newspaper in Rome published an article detailing aspects of the reported cure attributed to the intercession of Blessed Josemaria, affirming that the Holy See is studying it. Again, the journalist reported that his information came from sources unrelated to the prelate. Since

then, various communications outlets have mentioned the subject.

The Information Office of Opus Dei, in the absence of any data, cannot confirm or deny these reports. We can only repeat the Postulator's declaration from September 29. With regard to the media reports, it can be noted that since the beatification in 1992 the cause's Postulator has received news of medically inexplicable cures. Some of these have already been reported in various media outlets in the Philippines, Peru, Spain, Puerto Rico and, consequently are in the public domain. The Congregation has been presented with complete documentation about two such cures. Any news about the results of its investigations will come from the same Congregation, at the opportune moment. Out of respect for the Holy Father, it is necessary to abide by the Congregation's reserve. The Holy See

only makes public the reading of the decree approving the miracle — not the process' preliminary phases.

These preliminary phases are the decree of validity, the consultation with physicians, the consultation with theologians, and the ordinary congregation of cardinals.

Steps in the Approval of a Miracle

The path for the verification, study and approval of a miracle includes the following steps:

The office of postulation, when it feels certain about the extraordinary character of a particular cure, requests that the diocesan bishop begin the corresponding investigative process. When the diocesan investigation is completed, the documents are sent to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints to be studied to see whether

the proper procedures were followed. If it finds that the procedural norms in force have been properly followed, the Congregation gives a decree of validity.

The postulation office then writes a "Positio super miro", which is a systematic presentation of the evidence (both in the form of oral testimony and documents) which proves the miracle. The book containing this Positio is then sent to a medical consultative body which gives its opinion on the validity of the diagnosis and establishes whether the case could have a natural explanation from the scientific point of view.

Then a committee of Theological Consultants determines whether the cure can be attributed to the intercession of a particular candidate for the altars, that is, if there exists a causal relationship between the

invocation of the candidate and the disappearance of the infirmity.

Finally, the ordinary Congregation of Cardinals and Bishops who are members of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints needs to confirm the conclusions of the previous evaluations. If its judgment is positive, the proposal to decree the miraculous character of the case in question is presented to the Holy Father.

The decree is read in the presence of the Holy Father. The reading of the decrees is usually held three times a year.

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en-au/article/the-cause-of-canonization-
of-josemaria-escriva/ (06/27/2025)