

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLIS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 221109c

Tuesday 08.11.2022

Press Conference to present the conference “Models of saintliness and canonizations 40 years on from the Apostolic Constitution *Divinus Perfectionis Magister*”

This morning at 11.30 a press conference was livestreamed from the Saint Pius X Hall, Via dell’Ospedale 1, to present the conference “Models of saintliness and canonizations 40 years on from the Apostolic Constitution *Divinus Perfectionis Magister*”.

The meeting, to be held at the Pontifical Lateran University from 9 to 11 November 2022, is organized by the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints and the Pontifical Committee of Historical Sciences.

The speakers were Fr. Bernard Ardura, O. Praem., president of the Pontifical Committee of Historical Sciences, and Professor Bernard Dompnier, member of the Pontifical Committee of Historical Sciences and historian consultant of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, former lecturer at the University of Clermont.

The following is the intervention of Fr. Bernard Ardura:

Intervention of Fr. Bernard Ardura

“Models of saintliness and canonizations 40 years on from the Apostolic Constitution *Divinus Perfectionis Magister*”

(25 January 1983)

With the promulgation of the Constitution *Divinus perfectionis Magister*, on 25 January 1983, John Paul II declared that he was walking in the footsteps of his predecessors, especially Popes Urban VIII and Benedict XIV, who, already in their time, had been able to bring together the experiences of past centuries in order to make the study of the Causes of the Saints increasingly precise and documented. The same can be said of Pius XI, the Pope who, between the two World Wars, was aware of the importance of the

progress of historical disciplines, to enable a better and surer knowledge of the truth concerning the Servants of God proposed for Beatification and Canonization.

Obviously, with the simplification of the procedure brought about by the reforms of Paul VI and in particular John Paul II, there has been a notable increase in beatifications and canonizations, indeed brought to a peak by John Paul II, who in his pontificate proclaimed over 450 saints and almost 1300 blessed, a number unprecedented in the history of Christianity and representing over half of all the saints and blessed proclaimed since the end of the 16th century.

So, a question emerges, among the many that arise in the vast field of hagiography: which are the figures of holiness that the Church intends to propose as models of a holy life to the people of God? And another question immediately arises, in fact prior to the first: what are the figures of holiness that the Christian people present to the Church with a view to their canonization? Which are the figures of holiness with whom pastors and faithful most identify, in whom they see examples to follow, intercessors close to their needs?

In these three study days, aim to take stock in some way of the last forty years, from John Paul II to the present day, in the field of hagiography, theology and law relating to the Causes of Saints, and we will try to highlight the great variety of figures of holiness, from martyrs to religious and lay saints, men and women, ordained ministers, popes, doctors, children and adolescents. We will try to identify the environments of holiness that reflect our times: family and religious movements, and we would like to at least touch on some very relevant topics, such as the challenge of inculturation of holiness, holiness and mysticism, the various dimensions and significance of miracles in the Causes of Saints, without forgetting the representations of saints, which say something about the image we make of holiness itself.

Of course, one can distinguish holiness “next door” from canonized holiness, and so it is necessary to ask ourselves what we mean by canonized holiness, in the various religious, social and political fields.

Almost sixty years after Vatican Council II which, through its pastoral and liturgical guidelines, narrowed the celebration of the saints and focused worship on Holy Mass and on Christ, we must note the continued interest of the faithful and the popular devotion to the saints.

In this way, the figures of the most beloved saints tell us something about the living Church, about the faith of believers, their aspirations, and their relationship with God, with the saints and with their living environment.

Therefore, a conference on “Models of holiness and canonizations” is not limited to external observations, but enables us to enter into the life of the Church.
