

Blessed Charles de Foucauld is to be declared a saint, a second miracle having been ascribed to his intercession.

The first miracle, which led to his beatification in 2005, cured an Italian woman, Giovanna Citeri Pulici, of bone cancer. The second concerns the preservation from apparently life-threatening injury of a young French worker.

On November 30th, 2016, the eve of the centenary of Br. Charles's death, Charle, a carpenter's apprentice working on restoring a chapel in Saumur, fell over 50 feet from the vault onto a bench whose armrest pierced his left side and came out at the back at the base of his rib cage.



The 21-year-old did not pass out, got up immediately to seek help and, after an operation in hospital, was discharged after a week. Following convalescence, he went back to work two months after the accident without suffering any physical or psychological ill-effects.

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In February seven theologians charged with assessing the documentation presented by the postulator of Br. Charles's cause, Fr. Bernard Ardura, considered the particular context in which Charle had been preserved from mortal danger.

First, throughout 2016 many prayers had been addressed to Blessed Charles, and many groups belonging to his spiritual family, particularly from France and Italy, had been praying for his canonization.

Second, on December 1st, 2016 the parish of Blessed Charles de Foucauld in Saumur, unique in the diocese of Angers in being dedicated to Br. Charles, was celebrating its parochial feast day, parishioners having been encouraged to pray a novena to their patron saint in the days leading up to that date.

Third, the accident took place not only in the town where Charles de Foucauld attended the cavalry school as a young officer, when he was the same age as Charle, but also in the chapel of the Catholic lycée of Saint-Louis where parishioners were preparing to celebrate the centenary of Br. Charles's death. In addition, the accident took place at four o'clock in the afternoon, just before the liturgical feast day began.



Fifth, following the accident, an extraordinary number of people prayed to Blessed Charles to save the young apprentice. Among them was François Asselin, boss of the firm for whom Charle was working and a member of the parish of Blessed Charles de Foucauld. He spent the whole night in prayer.

Having taken these facts into consideration, the theologians concluded unanimously that God had worked a miracle through the intercession of Br. Charles, a conclusion seconded by cardinals and bishops on May 5th, leading to Pope Francis's authorizing the publication of the decree to this effect on May 27th.

The date of the canonization is expected to be announced this month.