

Pius X Begged Not To Be Pope; Now He Is Saint

By ELMER VON FELDT
(Staff Writer, N.C.W.C. News Service)

Almost 50 years ago a short, stocky man begged his fellow Cardinals not to elect him to the chair of Peter because, as he put it: "I am not worthy."

Giuseppe Cardinal Sarto had come from Venice to take part in the election of a successor to Leo XIII, but with a return ticket in his pocket. As the balloting for him became stronger, his face became troubled. There were tears in his eyes and his voice trembled as he pleaded with fellow Cardinals not to elect him Pope.

He went into detail to explain how he lacked the qualities needed in a Vicar of Christ. But his humility was more impressive than his eloquence, and on August 4, 1903 he was elected Pope, taking the name Pius X.

This weekend it becomes an indisputable fact that the humble Pontiff had been given an even greater dignity. He had been raised to the elect in Heaven. The solemn proclamation assuring the faithful throughout the world that Cardinal Sarto, later Pope Pius X, is a Saint is being pronounced by Pope Pius XII in a colorful ceremony in St. Peter's Square.

Pope Pius X becomes the first occupant of the chair of Peter to be proclaimed a Saint in 224 years. He is the first Pope in more than six centuries to be canonized by a successor who knew him personally. The Pope previously canonized was St. Pius V who reigned from 1566 to 1572 and was proclaimed a Saint in 1712. The last Pope to be canonized as soon after death as St. Pius X was St. Celestine V, who died in 1296 and was raised to the honors of the altar in 1313.

St. Pius X died on August 20, 1903. His last will and testament had stated: "I was born poor, I have lived poor, and I wish to die poor." But his solemn canonization this weekend gives proof to the Catholic world of the genuine wealth that awaited him at death.

The humble Pontiff had not only amassed spiritual wealth in Heaven. He had left the riches of an inspiring example on earth. He led to an official inquiry into his life with a view to beatification only nine years after his death. In 1911 he was declared a Blessed by the Church. This declaration was exceptional since the Pontiff had been dead only 37 years. Normally it takes many decades to be canonized. He has been canonized for at least 50 years.

Immediately after his beatification petitions from many parts of the world, including the U.S., urged the Holy See to speed the Pontiff's cause to completion and have him canonized so the entire Catholic world could give him the public honors of a Saint. These worldwide wishes are being answered with the solemn canonization this weekend.

INCLUDED IN the tremendous crowds in Rome for the canonization of Pius X are several hundred American pilgrims led by a score of U.S. Bishops, Archbishops and Cardinals.

American enthusiasm for the new saint is understandable because of the special affection shown by the former Pontiff for the Church in the United States, which he called "very dear to us." A group of Americans was among the first body of pilgrims received in audience by Pope Pius X after his coronation. The last group of pilgrims he received before his death was also from America.

St. Pius X paid special tribute to American Catholics in an audience he gave to students and alumni of the North American College in Rome in 1905.

The Pope then described the U.S. Catholics as people of a "living faith" accompanied by works, which manifests itself in true piety, in attendance at church services, in frequenting the Sacraments, in a generosity by which not only the rich but also the workers and the poor part of their weekly pay for Catholic worship, for support of the

St. Pius X Diary Of Eventful Years

(N.C.W.C.) News Service
Here's a diary of eventful years in the life and canonization cause of Pope Pius X who is being formally proclaimed a saint this weekend (May 29).
1857—Born at Bellano, small village in northern Italy.
1858—Ordained a priest at Castel Franco, Italy.
1875—Named chancellor of the Treviso diocese.
1884—Named Bishop of Mantua.
1885—Created a Cardinal and Patriarch of Venice.
1903—Elected and crowned Pope.
1904—Died at age of 78 after an attack of influenza.
1925—Inquiry into life and virtues begun by Church.
1911—Proclaimed a Blessed.
1912—Proclaimed a Saint.

PIUS X AT WORK



Rome—Shows seated in his private library in the Vatican Palace is Pope Pius X (1857-1914), who will be canonized on May 29. Always deeply interested in the Church in the United States, Pius once said: "I love these Americans. They are the blooming youth of Catholicism." (RNS Photo)

Canonization Described As Serious Business

By MSGR. JOSEPH J. SULLIVAN
(Correspondent, N.C.W.C. News Service)

Vatican City (NC)—Whether it concerns a sovereign pontiff like Pius X, or a young student like Dominic Savio, canonization is a serious, severe, scientific business.

Whatever may have been the story of the person—martyr, saint of the Faith or the lifelong practice of heroic virtue—the matter of declaring him present in heaven is a process which begins at grass roots on the local level and travels back and forth between there and the Vatican a number of times.

THE SARTO family was devoutly Catholic. The day began with prayer and examination of conscience in common. In the evening all joined in reciting the office of the day.
After early studies in Riese, young Giuseppe Sarto entered the high school in nearby Castelnuovo. He used to walk the four miles there barefoot, bringing his shoes over his shoulders to save leather. He put on his shoes only when he reached the town.

Desiring to become a priest, he took advantage of a scholarship to enter the seminary at Treviso in 1876. He completed his theological studies in 1884 at the major seminary in Padua, ranking at the top of his class.
His first post after ordination was in the parish of Tombolo, near Riese. At the age of 32 he was named pastor and arch-priest of Salzano, a parish of about 6,000 near Venice. Here his zeal and administrative ability quickly caught the eyes of his religious superiors. He initiated a number of projects for the poor, including a credit union for parishioners.

EIGHT YEARS later he was named a monsignor and chancellor of the Treviso diocese. In 1884 he was named Bishop of Mantua where he was immediately faced with a most difficult task: The Church was hampered by hostile political forces. A large number of the clergy had become negligent and many thousands of Catholics had fallen away from the Faith. He reformed the seminary and began teaching there himself and launched catechetical instructions for old and young alike.
After nine years of highly successful work in the diocese, Bishop Sarto was created a Cardinal and three days later named Patriarch of Venice. At the death of Leo XIII in 1903, he traveled to Rome for the papal conclave, with a return ticket in his pocket. But his high reputation among his fellow Cardinals prevented him from being that ticket.

The confidence of his fellow Cardinals for St. Pius X was highly justified by his fruitful reign from 1903 to 1914. He became known as the "Pope of Christian Doctrine" as a result of his encyclical, "Acerbo Nihilis," on the teaching of Christian doctrine. His pontificate was marked by the publication of 21 documents on the teaching of the catechism.

HE WAS ALSO called the "Pope of the Eucharist" for his famed decrees on Holy Communion, which called for frequent and daily Communion and early First Communion for children.
By issuing his "Motu Proprio" on sacred music, he caused a great revival of interest in Gregorian chant which continues to the present day. Among his other works were a start on the re-codification of canon law and the reorganization of the Sacred Roman Congregations.
At the beginning of his pontificate Cardinal Sarto chose the name of Pius, the Latin word for "pious" or "virtuous." At the end of that pontificate, the Church now assures us, he could be called a saint.

Pope Pius X Saintliness Long Haired

(Continued from Page 1)

he earned a scholarship to secondary school and later another to the seminary at Padua.

Ordained at 23, he spent nine years as curate in the village of Tombolo. There he became legendary for his sacrificial charity. Most of the time the few worldly goods the young priest owned were in the hands of pawnbrokers so that the poor and sick of his village might be fed and clothed.

HE ROSE TO the hierarchy, but his compassion never left him. Nor did he lose his acquaintance with hockshop proprietors. As Bishop of Mantua, to which he was elevated in 1884, he was often without his episcopal ring.

Even after he was made a Cardinal and Patriarch of Venice in 1893, he once had to confess he had pawned an expensive gold watch given him by a wealthy parishioner. The money had gone to support two needy families.

When Pope Leo XIII died in July, 1903, Cardinal Sarto hurried money to get to Rome for the Consistory. He bought round-trip railroad tickets, but the return stub was never used. Despite his almost fearful protests, his fellow Cardinals elected him Pontiff on the second ballot.

As Pope, he was rock-like in his defense of the Faith. His condemnation of the 65 propositions of Modernism rank with the condemnation of Molinism by Innocent XI in 1657 or that of Jansenism by Clement XI in 1713.

He constructed the machinery of the Roman Curia, created the commission for the great work of editing the true text of the Vulgate Bible, reformed the Roman breviary, restored the Rota as the supreme court of appeal and founded the Biblical Institute for the work of Scriptural research.

OF SPECIAL interest to Americans was his transfer of the English-speaking countries from propaganda or missionary regime to hierarchical status.
But early in Pius X's reign, the signs of impending world war became clear. Night and day he toiled to preserve peace, with increasing sadness and despair, for he soon saw his task was hopeless.

The summer of 1914 came. The Austrian archduke was murdered at Sarajevo and war burst forth suddenly. Broken-hearted, the old Pontiff fell ill of influenza. He died Aug. 20.

obliged to make the matter known to the proper authorities.

WHEN THE Congregation has been satisfied on all counts, including the non-existence of public veneration, a petition is addressed to the Pope asking for the introduction of the cause before the Sacred Congregation of Rites, in the Apostolic Process.

When the petition is granted by the Pope, "transmissorial" letters are sent to the place where the cause began, appointing at least five judges, such experts as are needed and two sub-promoters of the faith who serve as "devil's advocates."

Together with these letters go detailed instructions and lists of questions to be answered, information to be furnished, points to be cleared up, all of which are to be carefully included in the proceedings. Then the same process is repeated as in the informative stage.

From the diocesan or local level, these solemn proceedings with their results are then forwarded again to the Sacred Congregation of Rites for its judgment and possible beatification.

If a truly outstanding miracle is reported after beatification, a petition may be forwarded to the Pope for the resumption of the cause leading to possible canonization.

PIUS X LEAVES VENICE



Pope—This photo shows Pope Pius X, who is to be canonized in Rome on May 29, as he was about to leave Venice for the last time. Seen passing as one of his assistants knelt to kiss his ring, Giuseppe Cardinal Sarto, Patriarch of Venice, was given a warm send-off as he departed for the conclave of August, 1903, which elected him Pope—overruling his protestations of unworthiness for the great office. As he blessed the crowd, he waved a return ticket, saying he would be back soon in his beloved Venice—a promise he was destined never to be able to keep. (RNS Photo)

Time Schedule Lists Rites For Pius X

Vatican City (NC)—Following is the time schedule released here for the rites related to the canonization of Pope Pius X on Saturday, May 29, and Sunday, May 30.

At 5:45 p.m. (12:45 p.m. EDT), May 29, the Pope will be taken in solemn procession from the Vatican, across St. Peter's Square to the main entrance of St. Peter's Basilica.

At 6:30 p.m. (1:30 p.m. EDT), the rites for the canonization proper will begin with the Pope seated on a throne at the basilica entrance.

At 8 p.m. (3 p.m. EDT), all church bells in Rome will peal the joyful tidings of the canonization for a half hour.

At 10 a.m. (5 a.m. EDT) on Sunday, May 30, the Pontifical Mass in honor of the new saint will be offered in St. Peter's Basilica by His Eminence Eugenio Cardinal Tisserant, dean of the College of Cardinals.

At 5 p.m. (12 p.m. EDT) the remains of Pius X will be carried in procession from St. Peter's Basilica to the Basilica of St. Mary Major, where they will remain for about a week.

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