



## HISTORY OF THE CAUSE OF THE VENERABLE SISTER MARIA CAROLA CECCHIN

The process of canonization that leads to the proclamation of a new saint, is a very complex journey and includes two phases, the first diocesan, the second Roman.

a) The **diocesan phase** takes place at the diocesan level, it is up to the local ordinary of the place where the candidate died to conduct a thorough investigation of all possible testimonies about her life, the degree of her virtues, her reputation for holiness, her writings and the miracles performed by her directly or through her intercession. After this first investigation and declaration of the candidate as the "servant of God", the bishop transmits the acts of the diocesan process in Rome, to the " Congregation for the Causes of Saints".

The Diocesan Inquiry for the Canonization of the Servant of God Sister Maria Carola was opened 89 years after her death, on **April 24, 2014**, in the Archbishopric of Turin, by Archbishop Mons. Cesare Nosiglia and was closed in the church of the Little House of Divine Providence in Turin on **October 7, 2014**, in the presence of the Archbishop himself, after 17 sessions.

**Why after so many years?** The reason for such a delay would seem simplistic because it connected to the teaching of the Founder St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo who did not want his sons and daughters the holiness of altar, but the heroism of the daily life of sanctity celebrated *post mortem* in heaven.

That was not the case for Sister Maria Carola. One year after her death, her sister, Sister Scolastica Piano, also a missionary in Africa up to **1919**, felt the need to gather the testimonies from missionary sisters, from Consolata Fathers, from brothers and people who knew the servant of God and to have a biography of the sister published entitled "*Soavi memorie di Suor Maria Carola, Vincenzina del Beato Cottolengo nella Piccola Casa della Divina Provvidenza in Torino*". Undoubtedly this work, despite the limitations of the predominantly apologetic biographies of the time, is one of the main reliable and valid sources to draw on to get information on the life of the Servant of God.

It should be noted that the facts mentioned therein are precisely reflected in research and studies carried out by historians of the Consolata Missionaries such as: Candido Bona, Alberto Trevisiol, Iginio Tubaldo...; as well as in the rich documentation of the main Archives consulted: Vatican Secret Archives,

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Historical Archives of Propaganda Fide, Archives of the Consolata Missionary Institute and Archives of the Congregation Sisters Cottolengo.

The fame of her holiness, the analyses carried out shows, that has never been interrupted; already alive in the last years of activity in *meru* (Kenya) has been growing more and more after death and in the following years, until today both in Italy, and above all in Africa.

b) In the **Roman phase** of the canonization process, a priest appointed by the Congregation, after a careful study of the acts, prepares a report and submits it to the cardinals who make up the Congregation itself. After the final approval by the Congregation, the Pope, recognizing the heroism of the virtues of the servant of God, declares her "venerable".

The Cause of sr Maria Carola Cecchin in the Roman phase, had as Relator Mons. Maurizio Tagliaferri appointed on **June 26, 2015** and as Postulator Sister Antonietta Bosetti (sister of St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo), obtained legal validity on **May 29, 2015**.

After presenting the collection of documentation (*positio*), necessary for historians and theologians to examine the life of the Servant of God on October 10, 2017 the cause obtained the unanimous affirmative judgment of historians on and on **February 4, 2020** that of theologians. On **November 10, 2020** the cause had more than a favorable opinion of the Ordinary Congregation of Cardinals and Bishops.

On **November 23, 2020**, having heard the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints His Eminence Card. Marcello Semeraro, His Holiness Pope Francis authorized the promulgation of the Decree concerning the heroic virtues of the Servant of God, declaring her VENERABLE.

### **What will be the next steps?**

At the verification of occurrence of the first miracle through intercession of the new venerable, the Pope could declare her "blessed".

In the case of Sister Maria Carola, an alleged miraculous fact that seems scientifically inexplicable has already occurred and has been presented, accepted, and subjected to study, examinations and verifications by experts in the field to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, waiting for her to be declared Venerable. Now we will have to proceed to the latest analyses,

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discussions and comparisons and so be able to pronounce with certainty on the seal of God on the holiness of this Sister.

After a second miracle, the Pope will declare the blessed definitively "saint", thus concluding the process of canonization. At this point, the new saint is inscribed in the official "canon" (= list) of saints venerated by the Church and the date of her liturgical feast is set. This date coincides with the day of the saint's death, considered as the day of birth to eternal life.

We hope that Sr Maria Carola will soon be a future blessed of the Church especially because in Africa her memory is still alive!

DEO GRATIAS!

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