



Archdiocese of Detroit



The Capuchin Franciscan
Province of St. Joseph

POPE FRANCIS ANNOUNCES FATHER SOLANUS CASEY OF DETROIT TO BE BEATIFIED BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Momentous announcement celebrates second American-born male to be beatified; Capuchin Father Solanus Casey served the poor and sick at St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit

DETROIT, MI (4 May 2017) – Pope Francis announced today that Father Solanus Casey, a member of the Capuchin Franciscan Order of St. Joseph in Detroit and one of the co-founders of the city's Capuchin Soup Kitchen, has passed the rigorous test assigned to the process of Sainthood, by being elevated from Venerable to Blessed by the Roman Catholic Church. At 10:30 this morning in Rome, the Holy Father Pope Francis received in audience His Eminence Cardinal Angelo Amato, S.D.B., prefect for the Congregation of the Causes of Saints. During this audience, the Holy Father authorized the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to promulgate the following decree regarding a miracle, attributed to the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God Solanus Casey, born November 25, 1870 and died July 31, 1957. A photograph of Father Solanus Casey is available [here](#).

Because of Fr. Solanus Casey's holiness, Pope John Paul II declared him Venerable in 1995. Details on the Fr. Solanus Casey Beatification Ceremony will be released in the coming months.

"The beatification of Father Solanus Casey is an incomparable grace for the Church in the Archdiocese of Detroit and for the whole community of Southeast Michigan," stated Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron, Archdiocese of Detroit. "He is an inspiration to all us Catholics – and to all – of the power of grace to transform one's life."

Throughout his ministry, beginning in New York for 20 years, serving at three different parishes, Fr. Solanus was a beloved Capuchin Friar credited with miraculous cures and valued for his wise and compassionate counsel. He served at St. Bonaventure Monastery on Mt. Elliott Street in Detroit, where he worked for 21 years as a porter and spent his life in the service of people, endearing himself to thousands who would seek his counsel. He earned the recognition as 'the Doorkeeper' – a Brother who would provide soup for the hungry, kind words for the troubled, and a healing touch for the ill.

"Long before we knew and loved Pope Francis, we had the example of Fr. Solanus who lived the Gospel of Mercy," said Fr. Michael Sullivan, OFM Cap. and Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph. "Known for his compassion and simplicity, he drew many thousands to God. Rather than call attention to himself, he taught people to thank God for His blessings. We are overjoyed at the news that Fr. Solanus' holiness is recognized by the Holy Father."

Vice Postulators and Capuchin Friars Larry Webber and Richard Merling continue to gather documentation of healings attributed to Solanus Casey's intercession. This documentation is then studied in Rome. Another approved miracle will advance the Cause to sainthood.

"Over the years the fame of Fr. Solanus has extended around the world, and now has devotees in 27 countries," said Capuchin Fr. Larry Webber. "Thousands of favors attributed to the intercession of Venerable Solanus have been reported to the Office of the Cause for Sainthood of Father Solanus."

"This declaration means that the local Church, here in Detroit and in Capuchin Franciscan Fraternities around the world, may offer prayers and Masses invoking the intercession of Fr. Solanus," said Capuchin Brother Richard Merling.

Fr. Solanus was born Bernard Francis Casey on November 25, 1870 on a farm near Oak Grove, Wisconsin. He was the sixth child in a family of sixteen, born to Irish immigrant parents who left Ireland after the famine years. At the age of 21 Bernard entered St. Francis High School Seminary in Milwaukee to study for the diocesan priesthood. In 1897, he joined the Capuchin Order at Detroit and received the religious name of Solanus. In 1924, he was assigned to St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit. During his final illness, he remarked, "I'm offering my suffering that all might be one." He died at the age of 86 on July 31, 1957 at the same day and hour of his First Holy Mass 53 years earlier.

The Detroit Capuchins continue their ministry to the poor and the sick and those in need. They operate the Solanus Casey Center, which attracts 250,000 visitors a year. Fr. David Preuss, Solanus Casey Center Director stated, "We pray that Fr. Solanus' message of thankful prayer and service to the poor be continued in our midst. We look forward to his message becoming better known as he receives the honor of beatification."

Archbishop Vigneron added, "We are so grateful that because of this beatification, the Gospel of Jesus Christ – and the freedom He alone offers – will be proclaimed all the louder through Father Solanus. Let us, like Father Solanus, thank God ahead of time for all of these graces!"

Fr. Solanus co-founded the Capuchin Soup Kitchen in 1929 and today it serves Metro Detroit by providing food, clothing and human development programs to the people of the community. In addition to preparing and serving up to 2,000 meals a day, they have an emergency food pantry, service center and a tutoring program for children. Its Earthworks Urban Farm harvests six tons of produce from a two and a half acre organic farm. The Soup Kitchen's *On the Rise* Bakery assists individuals re-entering society after bouts of incarceration or substance abuse. In addition, the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Jefferson House – a twelve-bed residential treatment facility – assists indigent males seeking to reclaim their lives from addiction.

The work of the Capuchin Friars is funded primarily by donations, receiving no government assistance.

[ABOUT THE FATHER SOLANUS GUILD](#)

The Father Solanus Guild initiated the Cause of Solanus Casey for sainthood in 1966. Pope John Paul II declared Solanus Casey "Venerable" in 1995.

The Father Solanus Guild, a Capuchin ministry, continues to keep alive the inspiring memory of Fr. Solanus; brings knowledge of his exemplary life to others; collects information about his life and

work; provides prayer, support, and offers services to the Vice Postulator for the Cause of Solanus Casey.

ABOUT THE SOLANUS CASEY CENTER

The Solanus Casey Center is a world-class spiritual center dedicated to the holiness of Venerable Solanus Casey. Inspired by the holy life of Father Solanus, the Solanus Casey Center opened its doors in 2002 to lead visitors on a spiritual journey. Thousands come to the center each year for prayer, to nurture the spirit, and to visit Venerable Solanus' tomb.

In 1998, the Capuchin superiors recognized a need for a more hospitable way to receive the multitude of visitors who come to the tomb of Venerable Solanus each year. The result is the beautiful and enriching Solanus Casey Center where Venerable Casey's tomb is now located. It also facilitates the spiritual needs of visitors, drawing them into a pilgrimage of faith that inspires in all who visit an invitation to holiness in their own lives.

The Solanus Casey Center and Father Solanus Guild are ministries of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph headquartered in Detroit, which includes Capuchin ministries worldwide.

ABOUT THE CAPUCHINS

The Capuchins are an international community of friars modeling themselves after St. Francis of Assisi. The brothers of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph, headquartered in Detroit, serve in a variety of ministries including social service, schools, chaplaincies, retreat house and parishes in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Montana, Arizona, and Panama. Established at Mt. Calvary Wisconsin in 1857, there are currently 169 members in the St. Joseph province.

ABOUT THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT

With roots dating back to 1701, the Archdiocese of Detroit administers Roman Catholic parishes and schools within the city of Detroit, as well as Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, St. Clair, Monroe and Lapeer counties. The 1.3 million Catholic faithful of the Archdiocese are ministered to by 596 priests, 173 deacons, 899 religious sisters and 79 religious brothers serving in 222 parishes, 92 elementary and high schools, and five Catholic colleges and seminaries. The mission of the Archdiocese of Detroit is one of *Sharing Christ in and through the Church*. The Diocese of Detroit was established by Pope Gregory XVI in 1833 and was elevated to an Archdiocese by Pope Pius XI in 1937. The Most Reverend Allen Henry Vigneron, the 10th bishop and fifth Archbishop of Detroit, was installed on January 28, 2009.

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