

The miracle at Milan

On June 10, 2003, Cardinal Dionigi Tettamanzi, archbishop of Milan, recognized a miracle attributed to Louis and Zélie Martin. This allows them to be proclaimed “blessed” together. This is the second time in the history of the Church that a couple was beatified together; the first were the Italians Luigi and Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi, who were beatified on October 21, 2001.

The miracle took place for the newborn Pietro Schiliro, who is now six years old. He was born on May 25, 2002 with serious respiratory problems, and for 40 days he hovered between life and death in St. Gerard Hospital in Monza. From birth his status was much compromised. On June 3, his parents decided to baptize their child, who was in imminent danger of death. Father Antonio Sangalli, a member of the Carmelite Order, a friend and spiritual father to the couple, rushed to the hospital with a picture of St. Thérèse’s parents.



"We knew St. Thérèse, we had read her writings, but we knew little about her parents," recalls Adele, Pietro’s mother. "Father Antonio explained to us that Thérèse’s parents had lost four children at an early age: the prayers helped us to understand the meaning of what was happening to us with our little Pietro. We welcomed this invitation with confidence: further, knowing their daughter Thérèse, our asking for the intercession of her parents seemed to us to be something natural to do."

So the Schiliros began to make a novena to the Martin parents and asked their friends, their acquaintances, families encountered when they picked their children up from school, people of the parish, and people belonging to ecclesial movements to pray with them, giving them the picture of Louis and Zélie Martin with the novena prayer. This network went as far as Cambodia, where a family friend was a missionary. A biopsy taken from Pietro on June 5, however, confirmed a fatal prognosis, reducing hopes of survival even with respiratory assistance.

"So many people prayed with us and for us" said Pietro’s mother, "but at first I was resigned, and I already thought about the funeral, and everything that follows." However, friends encouraged them to seek the miraculous cure of Pietro. And so, on June 13, in the presence of many friends, having recited the Rosary, the Schiliros began a second novena, trusting in the intercession of the Martin parents. Doctors and nurses also participated in this prayer. And it was precisely a nurse who, on June 29, announced an unexpected improvement in the newborn. Pietro no longer needed 100% oxygen. Within a few days he was able to breathe unassisted, and on July 27 he was returned to his parents in perfect health.

"Given the complexity of the case and the clinical evolution," states a medical report, "we find the healing a surprise." This inexplicable healing was recognized as a miracle by Benedict XVI in Rome on July 3, 2008. After this recognition, this is the testimony of Adele and Valter, Pietro’s parents:

"We thank the Lord continually for his mercy towards us. He welcomed the intercession of Louis and Zélie and healed our little Pietro. He manifested his love by an extraordinary action in order to help us recognize His all-loving Presence in our ordinary lives. Louis and Zélie accepted the circumstances of their lives with confidence in the goodness of the Father, and this helps us and supports us in our daily lives. "