**Jubilee Year - 125 years of MSF, Conference for October**

**Beatification process of Fr. Jean Baptiste Berthier**

(Fr. Patrice Ralaivao MSF, Assistant General and Postulator of the cause of Fr. Berthier)

**Introduction**

Pope John Paul II died on April 2, 2005. On the day of his funeral, large banners appeared in the crowd and were shown on televisions all over the world: Saint immediately. In the same way, for our amiable Founder, Fr Jean Baptiste Berthier, during his burial in Grave, Holland, it was said: "A saint is dead" (cf. Positio p. 376).

My dear Confreres, on the occasion of these 125 years of our Foundation, we want to honor and thank Fr. Berthier. The Catholic Church, from its origins, has honored in a special way some of its most eminent faithful whom it considers "saints". Our amiable father Jean Baptiste Berthier lived through the stages of the process for a long time to be recognized for his heroic virtues, now he is Venerable.

**History of the cause of beatification**

A lively reputation for holiness accompanied the Servant of God in the community of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, in Holland, where he spent the last years of his life (1895-1908), but also among the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette, a Congregation of which he was always officially a member, and in France where he was well known as a missionary and as a writer.

In February 1930 the Bishop of 's-Hertogenbosch (Holland) gave the text imprimatur of a prayer with the image of the Servant of God. In 1936, Father Antoine Trampe, general Superior of the Congregation, appointed Joseph Kauer MSF to the postulator of the cause. The latter appointed Father Pierre Ramers MSF as vice-postulator, asking him to prepare the articles. This father was well prepared for this work: from 1926 to 1931, he had collected all the writings of Father Berthier, testimonies and documents about him.

Father Ramers did not have time before the war to prepare the articles due to his duties as professor and secretary of the commission for the revision of the Constitutions and Regulations of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family. However, to initiate the cause within the prescribed 30 years of the death of a Servant of God, Father General (Antoine Trampe) asked the Bishop of 's-Hertogenbosch in September 1937 to initiate the cause.

The ordinary trial of the 's-Hertogenbosch and the Grenoble rogatory began only 42 years after the death of Father Berthier.

This process was opened in Rome with a decree of June 5, 1953. The decree on the writings is dated February 25, 1959. The lawyer Carlo Snider was commissioned by Father Ramers, postulator from 1959 to 1962, to prepare the Positio on the introduction of the cause. He died in Rome in March 1962. His successor, Father Ernest Braun from 1964 to 1966, did badly with the lawyer from whom the public copy was taken over in 1968. For nearly 22 years no one was charged with resuming the composition of the Positio.

On May 27, 1986, Father Egon Färber, general Superior and his council appointed Father Edouard Jost MSF as postulator and collaborator. While working on the drafting of the Positio, he asked for the validity of the process, when the Congregation for the Causes of Saints asked, by decree of May 22, 1992, that a historical commission be established first to complete the documentation if possible. Appointed on November 30, 1995 by Bishop JG ter Schure, SDB, Bishop of 's-Hertogenbosch, this commission presented, on February 24, 1996, a 106-page report. Following this report, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints issued, on April 12, 1996, the decree validating the processes.

Father Edouard Jost finished his work and handed over his work (the Positio) to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

On May 10, 2002 the Colleges of Historical Consultors gave their evaluation on the Positio so that the Theological Consultors could resume their evaluation.

Fr Alois Hüging assumed the role of Postulator and prepared the Positio after the evaluation of the Historical Consultors and entrusted it to the Theological Consultors.

Since 2008, after a formation course in the Congregation of Saints, the general Government has appointed me Postulator. I brought 3 cases of serious illness, which after praying and doing the novena were healed. I prepared all the documents, hoping it was a miracle for the progress of the process, but the Congregation for the Causes of Saints (the medical specialists) replied that they are graces received through the intercession of Father Berthier; it's not a miracle:

On February 24, 2012, the case of Fr. Francesco Pavin MSF

On 12 June 2012, the case of Msgr. SUTRISNAATMAKA MSF

On February 8, 2014, the case of Iago Neves de Matos, a young man from eastern Brazil.

On October 5, 2017, the Theological Consultors expressed their positive vote on the Positio to recognize the heroism of the Servant of God Jean Berthier.

May 19, 2018: Pope Francis authorized the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to be recognized as Venerable.

May 21, 2018: the Congregation for the Causes of Saints promulgated the decree on the heroic virtues of Fr. Jean B. Berthier MS. So, the trial of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints is closed. For his beatification only a miracle remains. In conclusion, I invite all of you to ask for his intercession so that a miracle, necessary for his beatification, may occur.

Miracles are inseparable from the Christian faith. These are "topics of revelation". In his earthly existence, Christ performed many and various kinds: healings, liberation of the possessed, actions beyond the order of nature (water transformed into wine or the multiplication of loaves) etc. These miracles of Christ are "wonders" that manifest the power of God. They are also the works of the Lord, signs that mark his messianic character.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the miracle demonstrates the holiness of the person. From Pope Benedict XIV to today, we must remember seven characteristic things that will allow us to judge whether a healing is miraculous:

1. That there is certainty of the disease and that there is exhaustive documentation.
2. That it is a serious illness, because the healing of a benign disease cannot be declared miraculous.
3. That it is an organic disease, that is, whether it concerns an organ or a function of the organism. Hence all nervous and psychiatric pathologies are automatically excluded.
4. That healing must be instant, immediate and unexpected.
5. That is not due to previous medical treatment.
6. That the healing must be complete, perfect.
7. That it must be a lasting and definitive healing.

We pray incessantly for a miracle for the beatification of

our Venerable Fr. Jean. Baptiste Berthier MS