

Confirmed Miracle Brings John Paul II to Brink of Sainthood

The late Pope John Paul II moved closer to sainthood on Tuesday after a commission of cardinals and bishops credited him with a second miracle since his death, Italian media reported.

A canonisation ceremony for the Polish-born pontiff, who died in April 2005, could come as soon as December, news agency ANSA said. That would be the fastest progression to sainthood in modern times.

The remaining stage in the ancient procedure is a signature from the current pope, Francis, confirming the decision.

Vatican officials declined to comment.

The Congregation for the Causes of Saints, the Vatican body that reviews candidates for sainthood, decided the pope's intercession was behind the healing of a woman from Costa Rica on May 1, 2011, according to the reports.

He had already been credited with asking God to cure French nun Sister Marie Simon-Pierre Normand of Parkinson's disease, which helped lead to his beatification in 2011, when he was declared a "blessed" of the Church.

A second miracle is required in order for someone to be given full sainthood.

John Paul's successor, Benedict, waived a church rule that normally requires a five-year waiting period before the preliminaries to sainthood can begin.

John Paul's 27-year-papacy saw the collapse of communism across eastern Europe, starting in his native Poland.

Millions of people attended his funeral in 2005 and many cried "Santo Subito" or "Make him a saint straight away".