

## **Italian teenager Carlo Acutis to become first millennial saint on September 7.**

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The canonization of Carlo Acutis, the Catholic Church's first millennial saint, will take place on September 7, Pope Leo XIV has announced. Acutis, an Italian teenager who died from leukaemia in 2006, will be declared a saint by Leo at a ceremony in St. Peter's Square expected to be attended by thousands of young people. Acutis was just 15 when he died, but during his short life he used his computing skills to spread awareness of the Catholic faith by setting up a website that documented reports of miracles.

The Vatican said on Friday that following a meeting with cardinals Pope Leo will canonize Acutis in September, along with another youthful saint, Pier Giorgio Frassatti, who died in 1925 at age 24. Acutis' canonization had been scheduled for April 27 but was postponed after the death of Pope Francis. The September 7 ceremony will be the first canonization presided over by Pope Leo, the first American pontiff.

Acutis, nicknamed God's influencer, has developed a strong following among young Catholics and beyond. The British-born Italian teenager, who loved video-gaming, is often depicted wearing jeans and trainers, making him a relatable figure to a new generation of Catholics. His canonization also comes as recent surveys in the United Kingdom and United States show a rise in interest in Catholicism among Generation Z.

The church's sainthood process normally requires that candidates have two miracles attributed to them, with each reported supernatural occurrence requiring in-depth examination. In May, a second miracle attributed to Acutis was recognized by Pope Francis, a decision that paved the way for the teen to be declared a saint.

Acutis was beatified (declared “blessed”) in 2020 after his first miracle, when he reportedly healed a Brazilian boy with a birth defect that left him unable to eat normally. The boy was reportedly healed after his mother said she prayed to Acutis to intercede and help heal her son. The second miracle attributed to Acutis relates to the reported healing of a girl from Costa Rica who had suffered a head trauma after falling from her bicycle in Florence, Italy, where she was studying. Her mother said she prayed for her daughter’s recovery at the tomb of Acutis in Assisi.

Acutis’ mother, Antonia Salzano, previously told CNN that her son spent time helping the homeless in Milan and giving his pocket money to those sleeping on the street.