

# CAUSE P.J. TRIEST

News on the beatification

**Servant of God** Peter Joseph Triest

“My heart,  
strengthened by your grace,  
will burn with sparks of love  
for You”

P. J. Triest



## NEWS FROM THE CAUSE

Good news from the Cause. This is how we can summarize the follow-up of the cause for the beatification of Father Triest. After all, the study of the content of the documents was started after having received the happy news that the whole dossier, which is 22,000 pages, is technically in order. Once again, I would like to thank all those who contributed to this voluminous dossier, both in terms of content and logistics.

We have now entered a very crucial phase: the study of the content, for which the postulator was instructed to write out the *positio*. A new temporary Italian collaborator has been called in, as everything has to be worked out in Italian. In addition to Dr. Waldery Hilgeman, our postulator, we now welcome Dr. Emanuele Spedicato. We are in regular contact with both of them, especially if additions need to be made when putting together the *positio*.

First of all, the *positio* consists of the biography, which had to be completed with information about the historical backgrounds of Belgium and the Church at the time of Father Triest. In addition, a summary needs to be made of the interviews that were conducted. Since this is a historical process, it is also necessary to make a summary of all the historical material, which is of course the main part of this dossier. Then, it has to be demonstrated that Father Triest still appeals to people today. It is important that we receive accounts from people who have received favours through the intercession of Father Triest. Finally, and most importantly, it needs to be established that Father Triest lived the Christian virtues in a heroic way. We think that the *positio* will have about 800 pages, and we hope to have it ready by Pentecost 2020. May the Holy Spirit help us!

Once the commission has completed the study of the content and we are allowed to submit the *positio*, all this will be put before a committee of cardinals, who will have to decide whether Father Triest is indeed eligible for beatification. If their answer is favourable, the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints will present it to the Pope. If the Pope consents, the formal title of ‘Venerable’ will be bestowed on Father Triest, a title which he will never lose and which, hopefully, can be replaced by ‘Blessed’ or even ‘Saint’ in the near future. After this important formal step on the way to beatification, however, it is now a matter of waiting for a miracle as a sign of God’s consent to beatification. And for this we must pray.

Of course, the following question immediately comes up: how long does it take before the first phase of the Roman process is over? We need to know that there are many submissions awaiting completion. Perhaps the fact that Father Triest comes from Belgium is favourable, because in the context of evangelization the Church is looking for ways to stimulate the faith of the people, especially in Western countries. A beatification can serve as a powerful moment in this. In our most optimistic version, we hope that we will receive an answer within two years, but perhaps it may take longer. The fact whether or not there is already a miracle also plays a role in this.

We therefore live with great hope that we can gradually bring to an end the great work that we started with many in 2001 and then we must continue to pray so that Father Triest may officially be counted among the blessed and the saints one day.

Bro. René Stockman  
Promotor of the Cause

## SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE OF PETER JOSEPH TRIEST IN AND THROUGH THE LIVES OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF JESUS AND MARY

### Prayers Offered

The whole Congregation regularly prays to Father Triest. First and foremost, there is the novena to Father Triest for important events in the province or the country. There is also the prayer to Father Triest for vocations and for the well-being of his congregations; the prayer for the beatification of Father Triest; regular intercessory prayers for the various needs of individuals, communities, missionary needs, families, etc. There are also special prayers to commemorate the day of Father Triest's birth and death, and a full day adoration each to honour the Sacred Heart and to commemorate the death of Father Triest.

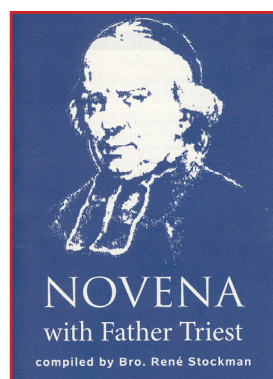
### Prayers Answered

In Congo, in the midst of wide-range violence, theft, and killings, and after two armed attacks on Sisters in two different convents, the whole province started praying to our Founder, Father Triest, for safety and protection, and for peace in the country. There has not been another attack on Sisters since then. Moreover, the overall experience of the Sisters was one of peace, joy, and confidence in the protection and providence of God.

Again in Congo, there has been a miraculous healing: one of our Sisters' father was diagnosed with an embolism in the head. The doctors had said that it was impossible to find a cure for it in the country and that it was urgent that he be sent to South Africa immediately. The Sisters in the community started a novena to Father Triest to intercede for a cure for the father. His condition began to change: he started to speak and walk. His doctors were astonished. The father left the hospital and got back to his normal life.

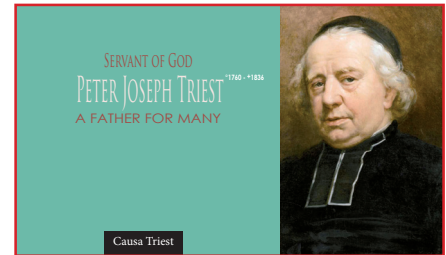
A young schoolgoing adolescent in Congo was healed of glandular fever through the intercession of Father Triest.

Favours have been received through the intercession of Father Triest in Rwanda. A litigation on land ownership was favourably resolved; the Sisters' property remained untouched against the government's decision to expropriate all property in the neighbourhood.



Unexpected rain sent away a group of military men who had come to mark the land for a road that would have cut through our property. They never returned. While another Congregation had to leave as they failed to get authorisation from the government for the construction of convent, etc. we could continue with the work with authorisation and complete it successfully for the mission.

Prayers have been answered through our Father Triest in Mali: healing of our Sisters & members of our families from sicknesses, even fatal ones; a small boy from our neighbourhood who had been in coma for a month after a serious accident came back to life without any after-effects; having exhausted all means



to give food to the poor, one of our Sisters prayed to Father Triest and he sent her a donor with the needed provisions. The Sisters experienced the protection from all accidents on a very risky road that they had to take. Through the prayer of a Sister, a man cured of tropical ulcer for which there was no cure in the hospital. Sisters feel protected and taken care of on a daily basis in a country of increasing insecurity and danger from terrorist activities.

Through the intercession of Father Triest, a situation that was charged with tension and conflict changed into one of friendliness in Congo; the needed funds have been received to finance a project for the poor; one Sister experienced healing of her sickness and restoration to good health; and there has been an increase in vocations.

The husband of one of the Associates, suffering from a severe case of kidney stones, could not find the means to get the needed treatment. Prayer to Father Triest offered with this intention for nine consecutive days by the Associate member and Sisters of the community was answered: the cost of the operation was reduced to an affordable amount and the operation was done successfully.

Sitting in the chapel before the relic of Father Triest and upset and worried over losing eyesight, one Sister in India reports an extra-ordinary experience in which her eye-sight is restored.

Also in India, the following experiences of individual sisters and communities have been recorded: obtaining a student visa for Canada for a relative after praying to Frather Triest for forty days; obtaining a



non-objection certificate from the government, often hostile to Christian presence & initiatives, to start a new mission station in a non-Christian area; healing from gastric trouble; healing of two children, in the care of a sister; one from high fever and the other from a skin disease; a few men got healed of their addiction to liquor, and peace was restored to their families; healing experienced by family members of 2 Sisters; a brother of a Sister getting a job through the intercession of Father Triest. The Sisters in India also experienced guidance and support when faced with difficulties; they found lost things; they received help and support in times of dire need; they had sentiments of extraordinary experience when they are in the proximity of Father Triest's relics; support of government officials, overlooking obvious mistakes and errors. The provinces have many experiences of getting land issues and construction problems sorted out or solved through the intercession of Father Triest.

The following favours have been received in Pakistan: donations received for charitable activities and for the construction of facilities for the poor; a court case settled and innocence proved; healing of severe skin infection; recovering of a lost child (2); a baby born after long years of waiting; lost property recovered; favourable weather changes that facilitated hosting of certain events; the expansion of ministries in the province; important documents misplaced & found / obtained; healing from partial paralysis; children and youth motivated to do something useful.

The following favours have been received in India: an acute water scarcity has been resolved; the settlement of a land issue which made expansion of ministries possible; hostile neighbours turning friendly and supporting Sisters in their mission with the poor, including donation of land and money; untimely rain miraculously supplying the much needed water during an acute water shortage, making possible cultivation, construction works, and completion of a health centre – all meant for the very poor in a very remote village.

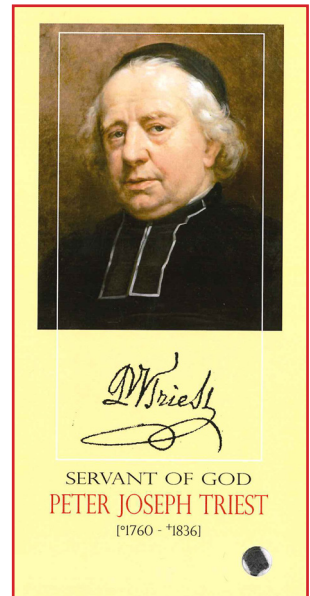
Thanks to Father Triest, big and small hurdles of the mission and ministries were regularly overcome. Father Triest's intercession enabled a handicapped young man to accept and live with his disability with joy and make his contribution to family and society; a person was healed of a nagging and increasingly intense back pain; a Sister got confirmed in her call to the SCJM way of life at a time when doubts and fears had gripped her; a family member got good employment.

In Belgium, a person was restored to good health and well-being from severe medical complications through the intercession of Father Triest; and a person received the blessing of a 'second' life after being in a

life-threatening situation for five days.

In England, an 18-month-old child, diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia made incredible progress and is completely cured through the intercession of Father Triest.

Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary Generalate



### CARDINAL BECCIU ON MIRACLES

In an interview with the Belgian Catholic weekly, *Tertio*, Cardinal Becciu, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, gave the following explanation of why a miracle remains essential for a beatification and canonization.

“A miracle is an event that takes place outside the laws of nature and therefore cannot be rationally explained. It can only be understood from a divine intervention. God must be the cause of the miracle. In the case of our canonization processes, these are miracles attributed to prayer to a deceased servant of God. Such a miracle then appears, as it were, as a sign from God with which He confirms his judgment of this or that person. This makes it possible for the Church to acknowledge a saint, not only as an example but also as a mediator. We can all determine that someone lived an exemplary life, but whether they intercede for us in heaven can only become apparent when our prayers are answered. A miracle is proof of this. This is why our Congregation pays so much care and attention to the miracles – usually miraculous healings – that are reported to us. To investigate them, we call upon experts – not necessarily Christians – who can judge from their scientific knowledge and in good conscience whether or not something can be scientifically explained.

Allow me to make a comment. The recognition of holiness of John Henry Newman was based on two miracles that happened in the U.S. and not in England. There are proceedings for a few Belgians as well, but the problem lies in the miracles that are not there. Believers have to pray for miracles and that is a problem in secular countries. Are there prayers for canonization and for miracles? Take the Flemish Jesuit Constant Lievens who was a missionary in India. The diocese of Bruges compiled the dossier on his

life, reputation, and virtues as is customary in the first phase of canonization, but I expect that a miracle will take place in India rather than in Belgium. At the moment, we have many canonization processes from India. There is a stronger sense of religiosity there and Hindus have a great respect for saints, as well. For example, many Hindus attended the beatification of the martyr Lazaro Devasahayam Pillai in 2012 because they believed that the holiness of that person and his relics also reflected on them. Rational Westerners may have lost that sense of holiness and that is a shame.”



Source: Tertio, interview with Emmanuel Van Lierde

### “DO NOT PRAY FOR MY CANONIZATION”

In some circles, the story goes that, just before his death, Father Triest said that they were not to pray for his canonization. That would be the reason why they waited so long to open a process for beatification, and some even used this to question the process as such.

Historically, there is no evidence that Father Triest said this. A transcription of his last words has been preserved, and there is no mention of Father Triest expressing this wish.

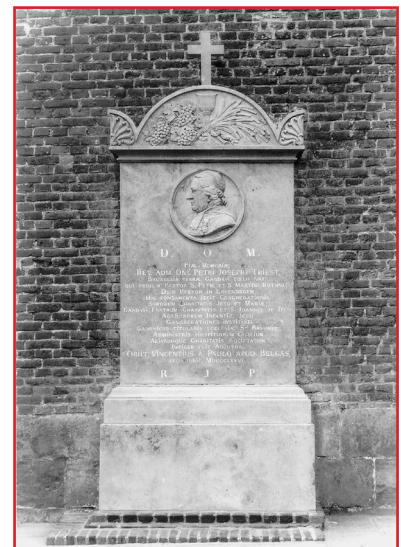
But let us just ask ourselves what these words of Father Triest, assuming he indeed uttered them, might mean.

Actually, this question is self-evident, for would it not be a sign of pride and self-congratulation if someone were to ask to pray for them so that they might once be raised to the honour of the altars. So, if Father Triest had indeed said this, it would only be a confirmation of his humility, which characterized him so strongly. No, he who so strongly emphasized humility in many of his writings and who actually lived it would never have been able to ask for the opposite, would he? But the realization that we are dealing with a saint is always an interpretation of a third person, someone who knew the person and who was impressed by their particular way of life. And that is what the general superiors of the three congregations founded by Father Triest decided at a certain time, thus setting the process in motion.

But we should also ask ourselves whether that question really could have come out of Father Triest’s mouth. In fact, asking the question suggests that he just might have thought that he could be counted among the

saints one day. And that, too, contradicts the humility that marked Father Triest so strongly. Of course, he strived his whole life to sanctify his life, and he did not fail to encourage others to do so, but in doing so he did not consider himself better than other believers. So just the thought of being canonized one day is not at all in keeping with the personality we have seen through his writings.

What we do know about his final moments is that he was worried about not forgetting to give bread to the poor at his funeral. That was classic Father Triest: concern for the welfare of others. And that is also the thread that runs through his life. Would he have suddenly thought of himself during this ultimate moment of his life and placed himself at the centre of his thoughts? However, he did ask not to pray too much for his recovery, lest it interfere with his ascending to his Lord in death. Once again, this is classic Father Triest: a deep longing to be united with his Lord whom he so strongly longed for. Perhaps this last prayer gave rise, with some adjustments and twisting of his words, to him asking not to pray for his canonization.



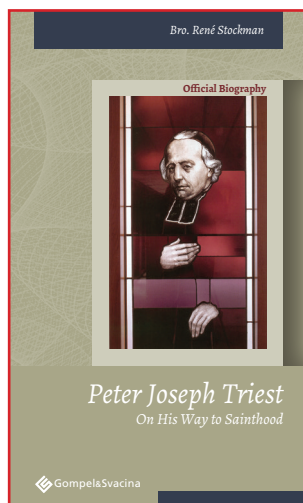
We therefore expressly ask that this supposed question be put aside for good, and even if he had asked it, not to let up in praying for his canonization. Father Triest deserves it, that’s for sure, and especially today’s people need examples to shape their Christian lives, and Father Triest’s life can certainly be helpful in this. Would it not be a sign of a lack of love and appreciation for our beloved Founder to stop praying for his beatification and canonization, when the Church has just given the green light to continue the process?

Bro. René Stockman

## PETER JOSEPH TRIEST ON HIS WAY TO SAINTHOOD

Several biographies have already been written about Peter Joseph Triest. The first one was published a year after his death, and since then several brothers and sisters of the congregations he founded have portrayed Triest's life and charism. For the process of beatification, which has entered the Roman phase, a new biography had to be compiled on the basis of thorough research of sources. It became the 'official' biography of Peter Joseph Triest, now being made available to the general public in several languages.

God's love was the driving force in his life and the source from which he radiated love to his neighbours, especially to those who lived on the fringes of society due to illness or poverty. It is this divine love that brought him to the periphery of existence, and others were inspired by him to go the same way of charity, even to this very day.



Also available in English and French.

The book can be ordered from Gompel&Svacina, or from the Cause Secretariat.

'15 Days of Prayer with Father Triest' is another publication that will be available soon in three languages.

An overview and the opportunity to order publications about Father Triest - including the novena, the prayer card, and the relic card - can be found on the [www.causapjtriest.org](http://www.causapjtriest.org) website. Ordering can also be done through the Cause Secretariat, of which you can find the contact details below.

2020 - Gompel&Svacina  
176 pages  
Price € 24,00 (plus shipping)

### QUESTIONS, FAVOURS, AND ANSWERED PRAYERS

All questions concerning the process of beatification, favours received, and prayers answered can be directed to the Cause Secretariat.



[www.causapjtriest.org](http://www.causapjtriest.org)

Secretariat of the P.J. Triest Cause

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