

## INFALLIBILITY AND CANONISATIONS

Please look up Papal Infallibility on Wikipedia and New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia.

“We decree and define that Blessed Padre Pio is a saint and we inscribe in the catalogue of saints and order that his memory be devoutly and piously celebrated.”

This is the formula the pope uses to canonise saints.

Strangely, despite Jesus saying only a few would be saved, the pope claims no power to know if a person is in Hell forever. If he is able to define that somebody is a saint it should be able to do the opposite as well.

Most theologians hold that the pope is infallible, speaking without error, in issuing a decree of canonisation. The wording of the decree is similar to that used by the popes when they made the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary a doctrine that Catholics are bound to accept as revealed by God.

St Thomas Aquinas said that it was to be held as a pious belief that the pope was infallible when making saints.

Some conclude from his words that they can disagree with the belief and be good Catholics.

But Aquinas in the absence of any decree from the Church that the pope was infallible could have meant that it was a pious belief in the sense that it was a revealed dogma that hadn't been recognised fully as revealed yet. The Church proclaimed papal infallibility in 1870 at Vatican 1. Aquinas wrote that to honour the saints by canonisation was to profess the faith of the saints – that is to say that if you revere St Rita as saint and exemplar you are really saying her faith should be imitated that canonisations were infallible. In other words, it is infallible because it is saying that the faith and Catholic life of the person is true and to be followed and the whole Church must do so.

Even if the pope is wrong that Padre Pio is in Heaven, then the infallibility covers the fact that Padre Pio's life was heroic and holy even if his death wasn't. He is still propagating the faith.

The idea that the decree of canonisation says only that a person is a saint or in Heaven is wrong. There is no point in making a saint unless that person is meant to be an exemplar for the Church. There is no need for canonisation if it is just about finding out if somebody is in Heaven. Many Catholics are supposed to go to Heaven after Purgatory anyway while saints go straight to Heaven without Purgatory. You don't need to know who is in Heaven to be able to call on the prayers of the saints. The decree commands that the person's MEMORY be kept and revered which is pointless unless the person lived a heroically virtuous life.

Strangely the Church does not proclaim beatifications to be infallible. They are usually the last step towards canonisation though sometimes the Church will have doubts afterwards and the person will never be canonised. Infallibility is just strange inconsistent nonsense. Beatification is not a declaration that the person is in Heaven but a declaration that a person is an exemplar and a model for the Church. Canonisation ratifies this decree and makes it dogma that the person lived a holy life and is in Heaven.

If a sinner gives his life for Christ he could be canonised for the sacrifice cancels out all the bad he did and so he could be regarded as a hero for God and an exemplar in the last moments of life.

If a candidate for sainthood was found to have died having being wilfully unorthodox the canonisation will not proceed. Canonisations are regarded as declarations that the person was orthodox to an exceptional degree in thinking and life and faith so they are infallible. Any heresy must be minor and accidental. Even teachings such as the ban on women priests are regarded as infallible though there is no decree to prove it for they were held true by the whole Church in the past. So it is concluded that a saint accepted by the whole Church must be a true saint.

Theologians believe in infallible teachings that are de fide credenda such as when the pope used the extraordinary magisterium or teaching authority to proclaim that Mary was conceived without sin. Teachings which are equally infallible but which are de fide tendenda are not proclaimed this way but are infallible because the whole Church believes them and they are the constant authorised tradition of the Church. They are safe from error for the Church believes that Christ promised the Church would never be led by error as a whole.

The declaration that somebody is in Heaven or was very holy and so is a saint would be de fide tendenda and so is infallible.

The declaration that the person's faith as distinct from the person is the true faith which is implicit in canonisation decrees would be de fide credenda. It is like saying, "The beliefs of this person are from God and true and reflect the spirit of the holy Church." It is not about the person but about the person's beliefs.

It follows then that Catholic doctrines which are de fide tendenda such as the ban on birth control and women priests become de fide credenda when a saint is made for the saint is to believe in these bans.

Rome never revokes canonisations even when a saint is found out to be a fake after canonisation. People have been canonised when the Church knew they were bad eggs.

Canonisations certainly disprove the infallibility of the Church and papal infallibility.