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Pope declares medieval mystic a saint, advances seven other causes

Carol Glatz Catholic News Service | Oct. 11, 2013
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Pope Francis advanced the sainthood causes of seven men and women, including a Canadian and an English founder of two religious orders for women.

He also declared the Italian medieval mystic, Blessed Angela of Foligno, a saint, foregoing the usual process of canonization and without formally recognizing a second miracle.

Pope Francis accepted a proposal Wednesday by Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for Saints' Causes, allowing Blessed Angela to become a saint immediately. The Vatican made the announcement Friday.

According to church rules -- established by the pope and subject to changes by him -- a miracle is needed after beatification to make a candidate eligible for canonization.

Pope Francis recently approved the canonization of Blessed John XXIII in absence of a miracle. Jesuit Fr. Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, told Catholic News Service that exceptions to the normal sainthood process have been made through the church's history.

Blessed Angela of Foligno experienced a conversion in the late 13th century. A worldly woman who looked down on those who observed strict poverty in religious life, she experienced a series of tragic events and suffering that changed her way of thinking.

After the deaths of her mother, her husband and her children, she sold all she had and joined the Third Order of St. Francis. She lived from 1248 to 1309.

The other decrees Pope Francis approved Wednesday recognized:

- The miracle needed for the beatification of Italian Mother Assunta Marchetti, cofounder of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo -- the Scalabrinians. She was born in 1871 and died in Sao Paolo in 1948.
- The heroic virtues of Marie Elizabeth Turgeon, founder of the Congregation of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. She was born in Beaumont, Quebec, in 1840, and died in Rimouski, Quebec, in 1881.
- The heroic virtues of Sr. Mary of St. Francis, who founded the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Victories. Of English nationality, she was born in Hurryhur, India, in 1840 and died in Portugal in 1916. She was raised in the Anglican faith and grew up in England after the early death of her mother. A vision of St. Mary led her to believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist; she became a Catholic and eventually joined the Third Order of St. Francis.
- The heroic virtues of two Italian founders of religious orders; an Italian nun; and an Italian layman and father.

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