

*Bolla Misericordiae Studium'*  
of Pope Benedict XIV  
published on 29 June 1746, by which  
the Supreme Pontiff declares that he has ritually inscribed  
Blessed Camillo de Lellis in the Roll of Saints<sup>1</sup>

## **SUMMARY**

### **1. Debut**

- 1) The law of charity, spread in the hearts of the Faithful through the Holy Spirit, has united the nations of the whole world with a bond of brotherhood. By this spirit of love the face of the earth has been truly renewed. By virtue of this spirit, mankind has begun to transform this valley of tears into an occasion for the exercise of charity and into an abode of pilgrimage towards beatitude, and human infirmities, already inherent in the members of the same body, offer to the patients a motive for the expiation of sins and the conquest of eternal health, while those who associate themselves with their sufferings are given the increase of merits with the confidence of obtaining for themselves the mercy they have granted to others.
- 2) Blessed Camillus, filled with this spirit from heaven, took upon himself the caring care of all the afflicted, especially the sick, and spread the spirit of his fervour to others.
- 3) This Blessed Man, who exercised the virtues to a heroic degree, and whose sanctity was magnified by Almighty God with miracles, we, from the chair of truth, propose that he should be venerated by the whole Church, invoked by the peoples, imitated by all the Faithful, and we attest to this by the contents of this document.

### **2. Description of the life of St. Camillus**

#### 1) Birth and youth

Camillus was born in Bucchianico in the year 1550, not without omens of future sanctity, to which, however, in his youth, dedicated to vices and in particular to gambling gambling, he did not correspond in the slightest. But God called him back from the

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<sup>1</sup> Translation from Latin by Giannino Martignoni in *Camilliani - Camillians* 96 (1996) pp.285-303

path of perdition to the path of salvation.

## 2) Conversion and the beginning of a holier life

With an ardent act of repentance, Camillus detests the errors of his previous life and resolves to irrevocably preserve for the future the grace of justification given to him by the Lord. Twice, therefore, the Superiors of the Order of Capuchin Friars were forced despite themselves to dismiss him from their community. Then Camillus took to devoting himself totally to the care of the sick and their needs in the Hospital of St James of the 'Incurables'.

## 3) Foundation of the Order of Clerics Regular of the Ministers of the Infirm

- a) Camillus gathered the most fervent workers of that hospital and other pious believers and thus founded a Company, then of laymen, who, exercising charity towards the sick for the love of God and rushing to the aid of the sick poor both in hospitals and in private homes, constituted an incredible utility for the whole city.
- b) Many clergymen joined Camillus. The latter also assumed the order of the sacred presbyterate, and therefore with his Companions began to provide individual sick people with the comfort of both spiritual and corporal life.
- c) To this Company of men who lived without vows Pope Sixtus IV, on 18 March 1586, granted the decree of approval under the name of 'Congregation of the Ministers of the Infirm', and endowed it with various privileges, among which was the faculty for the Members to wear, as a distinctive sign of their habit, a cross of tawny red colon sewn on the right side of their robes.
- d) In the year 1591, Gregory XIV elevated this Congregation to the status of a Regular Order under the name of 'Clerics Regular Ministers of the Infirm', granting the members the authority to take solemn religious vows and placing the Order under the immediate and special protection of the Holy See, endowing it with very extensive privileges.

## 3. The virtues of the Founder St. Camillus, first of all charity

Camillus observed all the laws of Christian perfection, especially that of charity, whose sublimity, depth, breadth and perseverance can be described as follows:

- 1) Sublimity: Charity was understood by Camillus as proceeding from God and referring to God himself, and at the same time made him interpret all things in creation as a motive for piety towards the Lord or as an opportunity to exercise mercy towards one's neighbour.
- 2) Depth: Camillus willingly fixed his eyes on the depths of his own humility, from which source emanated assiduous exercises of penance and mortification, especially

that resigned mental attitude by which he unceasingly assisted and served the poor and the sick, whom he brought near in the Lord, sustaining all the humblest and most tiring offices.

- 3) Broadness: Camillus bestowed the fruits of his charity on all people in tribulation and distress:
  - a) to all: that is, to the poor, to maidens, to widows, to children; and above all
  - b) to the sick: of all kinds and wherever they may be;
    - particularly in the hospital of Santo Spirito in Saxia;
    - even in times of plague;
    - and during floods, with the greatest danger to his life;
  - c) not only in Urbe, but also in other cities, such as Milan, Nola, Buccianico and throughout Italy.
- 4) Perseverance: Camillus persevered in this exercise of charity until his death (14 July 1614).

#### **4. The canonical processes of beatification and canonisation**

- 1) Camillus died in the reputation of sanctity. Immediately after his passing, regular processes were instituted, first by Ordinary authority and then by Apostolic authority, and on 24 July 1728 the Decree on his heroic virtues was issued.
- 2) Among the nine miracles produced, two were approved on 26 September 1741.
- 3) The Decree of Beatification was published on 2 February 1742.
- 4) Other miracles were recognised on 11 May 1745.
- 5) On 17 August 1745, the Decree was issued concerning the whole process leading up to the canonisation.
- 6) Wishes, prayers and supplications for the fulfilment of this Decree.
- 7) On 18 April 1746 there was a secret Consistory.
- 8) Public Consistory, in which the deeds, virtues and miracles of Blessed Camillus were exposed.
- 9) On 10 June of the same year, a semi-public Consistory was held, in which the question of whether a solemn canonisation should take place was proposed, and prayers were raised that God would enlighten the Pontiff's mind.

#### **5. Canonisation of Blessed Camillus**

On 29 June 1746, the Supreme Pontiff went in procession to the Sacred Memory of the Blessed Prince of the Apostles and - once again addressing prayers to the same - proclaimed Camillus de Lellis to be solemnly called a saint and granted an indulgence to the faithful who on 14 July devoutly visited the church of St Mary Magdalene, where the body of the new saint is kept. Finally, the Supreme Pontiff celebrated Mass at the

Altar of St. Peter the Apostle.

## **6. Epilogue of the Bull**

Let the Church rejoice! May the faithful be incited to follow in the preclinary footsteps of this Saint!

## **7. Clauses, date and signatures**

Authority is given to the copies of this letter. Sanctions. Signed by the Supreme Pontiff and thirty-seven Most Eminent Cardinals.

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Benedict Bishop  
Servant of the Servants of God  
in Perpetual Memory of the Fact

### **1. Debut**

1. The ardour of mercy, following the example of the Father who is in heaven, often recommended by the precept of Our Saviour, so distinguishes the disciples of Christ and the children of the Church from all followers of human associations, that those who live mutual love are ultimately recognised as those who have discovered a way of life superior to any ideology and as those who belong in a true sense to the Kingdom of the Son of God.

This law of charity was not carved into the stony hearts of the Israelites, it was not transmitted by inheritance from the Levitical tribe, it was not ascribed to the lineage of Aaron with the prerogative of the Priesthood, but it was gently and copiously spread in the hearts of the Faithful, as the stranger Samaritan brought the wounded Jew near, and then united all the nations of the Orbe terraqueo with the bond of brotherhood.

Through this spirit of love, the face of the earth was truly renewed, while the human race, stricken by the wounds of sin and its consequent pains, no longer regarded this vale of tears as a place of exile and torment, but as a field for the exercise of charity and the abode of pilgrimage to beatitude. And human infirmities, already made common to the members of one body, have become the occasion for the expiation of sins and the cause of eternal salvation; for those who then associate themselves with the sufferings of their brethren, they have been a motive for the increase of merits and the confidence of obtaining for themselves that mercy which they have offered to others.

2. Filled with this celestial and supernatural spirit, Blessed Camillus de Lellis mercifully took upon himself the care of all those in need, especially the sick, and took upon himself the task of welcoming and comforting them, not for reasons of blood or country, but, driven by the charity of Christ, with more than paternal and fraternal services. Indeed, realising that he could not alone extend his work and ardour to all the afflicted in every place, and naturally not beyond the course of his life in future times, after passing on to others the fervour of his own spirit and associating them with the everlasting bond of charity and committing them to the purpose of the religious vow, he entrusted and recommended to them the spiritual and corporal care of the sick.
3. Since the grace of God then established that the virtues of this blessed Man should attain to such a degree of perfection that human reason and natural powers could not attain, and since Almighty God has deigned to magnify before the sons of men the sanctity of the same by celebrated miracles. We, from this Chair of truth, with the consent of our Venerable Brothers, H.R.E. Cardinals, as well as Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops, assembled in notable numbers in the Roman Curia, and with the favourable opinion of the universal Church, propose that Camillus del Lellis is deservedly to be revered and venerated, to be invoked by the people and to be imitated by all the faithful, and we announce this with the content of this Letter.

## **2. Description of the life of St. Camillus**

- 1) Birth and youth. - He was born in Bucchianico, a town in the Diocese of Chieti, among the Marrucini, in the Year of Our Lord 1550. There was no lack of omens of his future sanctity on this occasion, such as when his mother saw in a dream that she had given birth to a child bearing a cross on his chest, at the head of a host of many others marked in the same way by a cross. But Camillus did not correspond to these wishes at all. He spent his youth in vices, devoting himself above all to the game of dice, wasting his health, goods and good name, so much so that, as his dishonourable state of poverty grew, he was forced to take on low services, totally unrelated to the condition of his birth, in the Hospital of the Incurables in Urbe, then to military service in the troops of Venice, and finally to the Convent of the Capuchin Friars of Siponto. Always inconstant, always unbearable to himself and to others, but never abandoned by the benevolence of the merciful God, who deigned to keep him constantly away from a deeper abyss, as from the impiety of blasphemy that was common among gamblers; and finally when, showing him the riches of his mercy, he shook him from the sleep of death and with a mighty hand and outstretched arm called him back from the path of perdition to the path of salvation.

2) Conversion and the beginning of a holier life. - So when Camillus was one day on a journey, reflecting to himself on the pious exhortations he had once listened to with annoyance, and as if ruminating on those words he pondered them in his mind, struck by an inner light, terrified by the knowledge of his sins and the fear of divine judgement, he prostrated himself to the ground; and he did not get up before he had vehemently detested the errors he had previously committed and had proposed to himself to irrevocably preserve the Lord's grace in the future.

From that moment on, Camillus, having become a new man, not only abstained from all kinds of vices, but began to strive resolutely towards the sublime goal of Christian perfection.

He took the habit of St Francis in the Capuchin Convent at Siponto. But the flare-up of an old sore, which had already struck him at the height of the tibia, induced the Superiors to dismiss him, and Camillus, with great pain, was forced to withdraw from that path of austere life so dear to him.

Returning to Rome, he went to his former home, the House of St James of the Incurables, and, the Lord having so disposed, he was entrusted with the administration of its goods.

Having assumed this office, Camillus, thinking he was serving not so much men as God, devoted himself totally with the utmost diligence and constancy to relieving the sick in their needs.

3) Foundation of the Order of Clerics Regular Ministers of the Infirm

a) But seeing that in this activity of his he did not find sufficient collaboration in those who, induced only by material merit, were employed in the services of this Hospital, he began to think to himself how to gather more fervent Workers, who would aim to attain the most praiseworthy reward of spiritual merits.

He communicated this project to St Philip Neri, his contemporary, whose directives and indications he followed. With his approval and exhortation, at first together with a few Orderlies of that Hospital, then with a larger group of the Faithful, he formed a Company of lay men, who took on, in obedience and for the love of God and in view of the reward of the future life, the care of the sick in the same House of St James. Having abandoned their previous comfortable way of life, they overcame the calumnies of the envious with divine help, and persevering with constancy in the institute, they soon extended their charitable work outside the said House.

Having then taken up residence in their own quarters in the city, from here they began to come to the aid of all the poor infirm, both in hospitals and in private homes, becoming a cause of incredible utility for the entire city.

b) This benefit became greater when, many clerics having joined Camillus, he himself,

on the advice of the aforementioned St Philip his spiritual director, after attending classical studies, giving an example of singular humility, at the schools of the Roman College, was promoted to the sacred Order of the Presbyterate. The Company thus began to offer all the sick the comforts not only of the material life but also those of the spiritual life.

c) Moved by this, the Most Wise Pontiff Sixtus V, Our Predecessor, by his Apostolic Letter, issued from the See of Peter with the Seal of the Fisherman on 18 March 1586, granted perpetual approval and confirmed this Institute of Almighty God, dedicated to the service of his poor infirm and to the purpose of voluntary Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, without, however, the obligation of promising a vow, praising and commending it, under the title of Congregation of the *Ministers of the Infirm*. He granted various Indults and Privileges to the Congregation, among which was the singular one, issued in a letter dated 26 June of the same year, by which he allowed the Sodal members of the Congregation to wear a cross of tawny red cloth, sewn on the right side of their robes, as a distinction of their habit.

d) This Congregation, a few years later, having Camillus as its headmaster and promoter, not only increased its fruits, but, increasing in the number of respectable members, moved to the larger House of Saint Mary Magdalene in the Urbe, in the Colonna district. At the same time all the members expressed the aspiration to be able to establish religious life, under wise laws and rules prescribed by Camillus himself and with the solemn profession of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, in the perpetual service of the sick, not excluding those infected with the plague.

These Rules were then presented to Pope Gregory XIV, our Predecessor of happy memory, which were examined and approved. Following this, it pleased the same Gregory to erect the aforesaid Congregation into a Regular Order under the name and title of "*Regular Clerics Ministers of the Infirm*".

The same Pontiff decreed that the Professed of the same Order, wherever they then and hereafter dwelt, should be perpetually under the immediate and special protection of Him and the Apostolic See, endowed with the most ample favours and privileges granted by the Apostolic liberality.

All this is distinctly contained in the Letter of our same Predecessor Gregory, issued at St. Mark's in the Year 1591 of the Incarnation of the Lord on the 21st of September.

e) From this new school of charity the benefit that has arisen for human beings of all categories, both for bodily and spiritual health, is cause for wonder. No longer did the sick have to complain of incurring the tribulations of sickness and the sadness of abandonment; no longer did they fear facing the danger of imminent death aggravated by the sins of their past lives; no longer could the adversary of mankind find the miserable mortals, having come to the point of extreme fatigue, circuited by his

inauspicious rage, unprepared for not having received the help of the sacraments and deprived of the help and consolation of the exhortations of the Faithful. Cleanliness was restored to the hospitals, the Orderlies were relieved of their labours, the Pastors of souls were helped everywhere, relieved of their anxieties, anxieties and anxieties, so that it is not surprising that so many Houses of this Institute soon sprang up and in a short time spread throughout Italy, in Sicily and in other more distant regions, with the applause of the Citizens and the consent of the Bishops.

In these communities, to the great benefit and advantage of the people, a spirit of exalted charity prevails, transmitted and spread through Camillus to his children and disciples.

**3. The virtues of the Founder St. Camillus,** first of all charity. The Founder and promoter of this beneficial work lived fully himself all the prescriptions of Christian perfection that he had taught others, and especially that which is the fullness of the law, namely *charity*. From the information on his life and the accurate documents on his activities, we can know with certainty the characteristics of his virtue, both its *sublimity* and *depth*, and its *breadth* and *perseverance*.

1) Sublimity. - Truly sublime is charity, which, proceeding from God and referring to God himself, made Camillus see in all created things, which for others are often an incentive to disordered greed, solely as a motive for piety towards God, or as occasions to exercise mercy towards one's neighbour.

Thus from all the realities that presented themselves to his senses he found new incitements to love and praise the Creator and to increase the fire of his charity ever more. Likewise he felt impelled to speak assiduously of God and to express, not without tears, vehement acts of love towards Him. His heart burned with such fervour that a ray of light sometimes emanated from his face, visible to all. And yet he suffered that he did not feel adequately equal to the infinite goodness of God, and therefore he wished that he had been given infinite lives to spend all for the love of God.

Ignited by this desire, he disposed himself to perform works of mercy for his neighbour with such a spirit that he directed all his strength to an act of worship to Almighty God whom he saw present in the poor, and from this conviction he never turned his mind and spirit away.

He therefore led an almost celestial life on earth. He was often seen as torn from his senses in admirable ecstasy, elevated and suspended in the air with his whole body, while he was associated with communion with the blessed spirits: from here and with the help of them he faced the battles of life. And, according to the testimony of St Philip Neri, it appears that angels appeared at the side of the Saint's Companions as they assisted the sick.

But in addition to this, Camillus, enriched by God with other supernatural graces, still

gave innumerable proofs of heavenly favours, the spirit of prophecy, the gift of healings and an admirable power over the laws of nature during his lifetime.

- 2) Depth. - Camillus, however, lowering his eyes from the sublimity of his virtues and higher charisms and willingly directing them to the depths of his humility, without ever letting himself be taken in by the forgetfulness of his former errors and the need to purify himself, often called himself the worst of sinners. He declared himself unworthy to live among men and with intimate conviction professed himself to be an eternal firebrand.

But from this source of humility arose assiduous exercises of penance and mortification with which he afflicted his body. Above all, his resigned interior attitude induced him to serve and assist the sick ceaselessly, in all the humblest and most tiring services. Nor did he allow himself to be exalted in any way by the thought that he had founded a religious institute, greatly pleasing to God and man, and that he had administered it wisely and spread it everywhere.

Indeed, eschewing the name of Founder, reserved for him by fate, after bearing the presidency of the Order for twenty-seven years with such patience and care, he finally, assured by the good state and government of the Order, humbly renounced this office and resigned. So that he could say to his brothers, with Him from whom he had learned to be meek and humble of heart: 'I am among you as one who serves'. From this his followers drew new fruit, for while from the Moderator of the Order himself they had received the norms and Rules of Life, they were also able to learn, by contemplating his examples, the form of perfect subjection and obedience.

- 3) Breadth. - But now let us see with what breadth Camillus' heart expanded, so that the fruits of his charity would reach all brothers and sisters in tribulation and distress. On this subject we find it impossible to illustrate all the activities that he assiduously undertook to support the poor, to feed and house them, to defend and shelter young girls, to protect and care for children. Just one work for all, which he took on as his own and which was primarily concerned with assisting the sick in soul and body, aptly demonstrates the almost immense extent of his charity.

For who in the City was sick and Camillus, with merciful affection, did not fall sick with him? Whom did he not rush to and, either by being present himself, assist him, serving him and consoling him to the last extremity, or by means of his Companions, send the desired relief?

To whom oppressed by poverty or prostrated by sickness or terrified by the great fear of death, did he not offer the appropriate comforts of body and spirit and sustain him in the confidence of eternal salvation?

Has there been anyone ensnared by vices and sins, or ignorant of the mysteries and truths of Religion, whom he has not endeavoured to lead back to better intentions and

to readmit into the bosom of the Divine Goodness, or whom he has not instructed in the doctrine of the Faith and the law of the Lord?

Indeed, it is well known that some Heretics, stricken with disease in Urbe, impressed by the charity and affability of Camillus, and enlightened by his instructions and exhortations, with the help of Divine grace, were readmitted to the Catholic Church. Meanwhile, while he multiplied his daily labours in all parts of the City, he also increased his work in public hospitals, especially in the *House of Santo Spirito in Saxia*, where he directed the intentions of his projects and activities, to the point of wanting to locate the permanent seat of his existence there.

Here, not only the caretakers and auxiliaries, but the managers themselves saw him precede everyone in taking on all kinds of services, in taking on tasks that were shared among many, and in performing them with admirable diligence.

Here the sick were able to obtain all those services that every person is used to request from friends, family and relatives. Nor can one imagine any greater solicitude of a loving mother for her only infirm child than that which Camillus had for each and every sick person by anticipating their wishes, providing for their comfort, comfort and cleanliness, and encouraging a wise acceptance of the Sacraments.

She devoted herself particularly to those sick people from whom others, for fear of contagion or because of the nausea of the wounds, shunned with horror. She did not fail to take them into her arms, to warm them in her bosom, to cover them with her garments.

In this situation, he would often continue the considerable exertions of the day with those of the night, without worrying about his ulcerated leg, without caring about the discomfort and pain of his hernia, without remembering to sleep or rest, until he found himself repeatedly exhausted on the ground, worn out by the hardships of his body and the bewilderment of his spirit.

It remained to be seen whether with these premises, Camillus' charity would in fact reach the degree of dedication that he and his Companions had vowed to provide help and succour even to the plague-stricken sick.

And in fact, four years after the Order was approved by the Apostolic Authority, the city of Rome was invaded by a contagious plague, aggravated by a famine of basic foodstuffs, to the point that the city, struck by this twofold calamity, was filled with mourning, death and devastation. Many human beings were annihilated by the virulence of the disease, many fell from misery and hunger, even more from despair and horror.

All seized by fear, by the imminent danger of their lives, they rushed to seek in any way shelter for their health, or a place of safety, or at least the means to oppose so much misfortune.

While in truth Camillus, despising his own safety and life itself, did not hesitate at all to devote himself and his followers totally to public health.

Hence he was seen not only repeatedly appearing in all public Hospitals and bringing relief to the poor by action, advice and exhortation, but also entering private homes with unrelenting solicitude, and, when the doors were closed, penetrating them through the windows by means of ladders set up outside.

He anxiously reached the most remote places, the dark caves and filthy stables. He worked hard to find out where languishing, afflicted, starving people were hidden, to help and relieve them with all the means at his disposal, to heal them in their sores, to remove putrefaction, to remove filth; to clean their beds.

He also opened a Hospice in the House of his Institute, another in the Quartiere Coelimontano near Santo Spirito, another he set up on the Capitoline Hill in Via delle Carrozze, and made sure that sick people were gathered in those places from all parts, many of whom he carried on his shoulders himself.

Throughout the quarters of the vast city, Camillus alacrily lent his help with action, word and spirit, so that it was not without reason that the most clement Lord, who even in times of wrath remembers his mercy, after having decreed this calamity for the city, had wanted to provide this providential relief through Camillus and his followers.

Having calmed that storm, two years later a new kind of calamity offered Camillus the opportunity to demonstrate his ardent charity towards his neighbour in need.

For having the Tiber, with the growth of its waters above the guard limits, inundated the greater part of the City, and invading the neighbouring buildings of the Santo Spirito and flooding the lower rooms, Camillus began, advancing through the waters, to transfer elsewhere the sick and their beds, carrying them on his shoulders, and he did not cease from this work, which required three days of toil before he saw that everything and everyone was made safe.

If it is true what the Witness of eternal truth says, that no one has greater love than he who lays down his life for his friends, what is it that we do not recognise the heroic charity of Camillus, who never refrained from risking his life for the lives of Christ's poor, nor did he ever judge his existence more important than the health of his brothers for which his heart burned so much?

The vastness of his love was not restricted to the confines of the Roman city, but embraced other *regions* and *cities*, in which he had spread the fruit of his Institute. He travelled almost all over Italy doing good, exercising everywhere the marvellous work of his charity, helping with opportune means the needs of all.

At the outbreak of the plague in the cities of Milan and Nola, Camillus spontaneously rushed in carrying the fire of charity in his heart, at the very times when others avoided any contact with those cities and even the inhabitants of those cities tried to move away. And in both of these places he presented again the admirable examples of that virtue that had already shone in Rome, gaining the same appreciation in all categories of people.

And so when Camillus heard that his home town, Bucchianico, was hit by a severe famine, he immediately flew there from Rome and surprisingly managed to comfort his fellow citizens with the goods of providence and the services of charity, as well as with extraordinary miracles obtained from God.

4) Perseverance - Finally, it must be said that Camillus fanned the unquenchable flame of his charity until the end of his life, until the goal of his admirable journey.

And when for thirty-three months he was afflicted with languor and an unbearable and troublesome fever, hastening with desire the day of his death, foretold to him from heaven, having nothing else in his heart but the love of God and neighbour, recommending nothing but this to his Disciples, in the end, having received with piety and devotion the Sacraments of the Church, on the 14th July of the year of salvation 1614, the sixty-fifth of his life, he emigrated into the realm of perfect charity.

#### **4. The canonical processes of beatification and canonisation**

1) All those who knew the struggles and labours of Camillus had no doubt that to him the righteous Judge would have rendered the crown of justice, He who also showed his appreciation for the devout acts of worship of the large crowd that flocked to the funeral, recognising the already manifested signs of divine power.

Since the universal fame of these miracles and above all of the acknowledged sanctity of the Servant of God and the constant judgement of the people was evident, the regular Trials were immediately instituted. Once these processes had been carried out, first by Ordinary authority and then by Apostolic authority, their validity was approved, and after an accurate and repeated examination of all the documents, having ourselves, in our office of Promoter of the Faith entrusted to us, put forward all the strictest grounds for doubt, in the end our Predecessor of happy memory Pope Benedict XIII, with the consent of the Congregation of the Sacred Rites, expressed a positive judgement on the heroicity of Camillus' virtues, as is shown by the Decree he issued on 24 July 1728.

2) Subsequently, having examined by the same Congregation the miracles which appeared to have taken place after the death of Camillus and through his intercession, and having been transmitted to Us, now installed on the Chair of Peter, the relative acts after having invoked the help of the Divine light and having considered again the documents of the proofs, it seemed good to us to approve without a shadow of doubt two miracles in particular among the nine proposed one concerning the case of a young girl from Viterbo, suffering from an enormous polyp in her nostrils, persistent for several months, whereby, by mere contact with a thread of the Servant of God's sub-tunic, the polyp disappeared entirely. The second concerns a woman by the name

of Caterina Dondula, who, struck by a lethal syndrome of ailments, i.e. fever, inflammation of the lungs and pleurae, with even ulcerous outbursts in the larynx, being also already in the sixth month of pregnancy, was by now reduced, even in the opinion of the doctors, to the extremity of life; but all these ills, only when she drank some water in which some powder collected in the Servant of God's cubicle had been dissolved, immediately vanished, so that the sick woman not only regained her health but also her former strength in a moment.

Of these miracles We gave public approval with the decree of 26 September 1741 and now accept the judgement of the aforementioned Congregation on the honours of Beatification to be attributed with certainty to the Servant of God himself.

3) Finally, on February 2, 1742, on the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on which day Camillus was once, as it is said, enlightened by a ray of supernal light, brought back to the right path, We issued another Decree concerning the official execution of the Beatification of the same Servant of God. And subsequently, in the Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles in Rome, the solemn rites for this event were celebrated, by virtue of Our Apostolic Letter, issued under the seal of the Fish - on the 7th of the same month and year.

4) Having granted the faculty of veneration to this Blessed, which was immediately rendered with great devotion by the Faithful, other Miracles followed, which appeared to prove the manifest will of God concerning a greater glorification on this earth of the same Blessed. We therefore officially delegated, with our Apostolic authority, three Bishops to carry out the necessary examinations of these Miracles. And having ascertained the validity of the Processes carried out by them, of the three miracles discussed in the aforesaid Congregation of Sacred Rites, having heard that the judgment of the Experts was equal, and having made new enquiries as to the duration of the healings obtained, we proposed two as particularly worthy of our approval.

And again, after Our personal enquiry and invoking the light of the Holy Spirit, judging these miracles to be of evident clarity, 11 May last 1745 by Our Decree We approved and published them.

The first concerns the recovery of the young Lucia Teresa Petti; from Caprarola, who had been suffering from birth, due to an abnormal structure of the thorax, from considerable difficulty in breathing, and as she grew older, her asthma attacks worsened, with repeated expectorations of pus and blood, and, in great physical prostration, even having produced an external hump, she showed that she could not continue living for long, having become burdensome to herself and others.

Finding herself in this extreme tension caused by such ills, having invoked the help of Camillus and drunk water mixed with the aforementioned powder, in the space of a single night she was freed from all her ailments and restored to perfect health.

The other miracle concerns the instantaneous healing of the young 22-year-old Margherita Castelli from Marino. Due to a blood disease contracted from her mother's womb, she was often afflicted by malignant pustules, which then multiplied to such an extent that her whole body seemed to be covered by a single scab, from which corrupted blood and liquefaction emanated, and was also overcome by fits of fever and lost all faculties of movement and sensitivity. Suddenly, when the image of Blessed Camillus was imposed on her and a prayer was recited by her mother and sister, as if she had been awakened from the sleep of death, she was completely cured; her body suddenly lost all swelling, the scabs fell off, the fever vanished, so that the young woman, her strength restored, promptly got out of bed and was able to walk and work again. And from then on, she suffered no more ailments of the former inveterate illness.

- 5) The same Congregation of the Sacred Rites was then asked whether, things being so, it considered it opportune to proceed with certainty to the solemn Canonisation of Blessed Camillus. All of Our Venerable Brothers H.R.E. Cardinals who are members of the same Congregation, as well as the beloved sons belonging to the same, consented with a positive opinion.

We therefore, after further careful reflection and fervent prayers offered to God, on 17 August last year, on the anniversary of the day on which the supreme Divine Will raised us to the pinnacle of the Supreme Pontificate, declared by public decree that we personally adhere to the aforementioned Congregation's ruling.

- 6) To complete this Decree were urgent not only the votes of the people of the Faithful but above all those of our City, and even more so the prayers and supplications of the aforesaid Congregation of the Clerics Regular Ministers of the Infirm, to which Philip III and Philip IV, Catholic Kings of happy memory, and a great many Ecclesiastics and Superiors of the Secular Order had also added their requests, Just as recently, Our Dearest in Christ, Charles, King of the Two Sicilies, and his Consort, Our Dearest Daughter in Christ, Maria Amalia, likewise illustrious Queen of the Two Sicilies, and numerous other Bishops and Princes, beloved sons and noble elected men of the City of Naples, humbly sent us their requests.

- 7) In the secret Consistory of 18 April last, held in Our presence, We communicated this intention to the whole College of Our Venerable Brothers, H.R.E. Cardinals; they, having heard from Us of the state and merit of the cause, declared themselves in favour of continuing the trial, always observing the due norms; finally We, having summoned by Letter several Venerable Brothers Archbishops and Bishops of sees in various Churches, We resolved to hear their opinion as well, as is customary and fitting in a judgement of such importance.

8) Therefore, the deeds, virtues and miracles of Blessed Camillus were first of all exposed in the consensus of the aforementioned H.R.E. Cardinals and Bishops and of all the Orders of the Roman Curia by our beloved son Giulio Cesare Fagnano, Advocate of Our Consistorial Hall; furthermore, to the same and to their judgement were submitted a summary report of the deeds of the Blessed, faithfully taken from the documents of the Congregation of the Sacred Rites, with the complete series of Acts.

9) On the tenth day of the current month of June, Your Royal Highnesses Cardinals and Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops, congregated before Us in a semi-public Consistory, in the usual presence of Our beloved sons the Notaries of the Apostolic See and the Hearing Officers of the Causes of Our Palace, we asked them if they thought it would be possible to solemnly canonise the Blessed.

All with unanimous consent declared themselves persuaded that this should be done by us, expressing also in writing their vows, of which we ordered a record to be made in the tabulary of the Roman Church.

We therefore urged them all to lift up their prayers to God to implore from Us the help of His supernal enlightenment.

Then We proclaimed a general fast for the whole City and designated the Churches where it was possible for all the faithful, united in prayer with Us, to acquire the Indulgence. And having also celebrated Holy Masses for this purpose, We prayed to Almighty God to deign to grant the assistance of His wisdom to enlighten the darkness of Our mind.

## **5. Canonisation of Blessed Camillus**

On the day consecrated to the martyrdom of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, in the radiant jubilation of the Roman Church, We, preceded in procession by all the Orders of the Secular and Regular Clergy in prayer and followed by the Officials and Ministers of Our Hall and Curia, surrounded by a large number of Priests, went in procession, with the rite of solemn supplication, to the Sacred Memorial of Blessed Peter the Apostle in the Vatican.

Here again, prayers and supplications were addressed to us by Our beloved son Cardinal Presbyter Joachim Portocarrero, appointed with the title of the Four Crowned, as well as by the aforementioned Supreme Princes and Principals of the Churches and the Congregation of Clerics Regular.

Therefore We, in the name of God invoked with groans, in praise of the Holy and indivisible Trinity, for the glory of the Church Triumphant and for the consolation and protection of the Church Militant, by the authority of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of the

Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and Ours, and with the consent of the aforesaid assembled Fraternity, the said Camillo de Lellis, Priest of the Diocese of Chieti, Founder of the Congregation of the Clerics Regular Ministers of the Infirm, whose excellent Faith and Charity and other Virtues in a heroic degree, as well as the Miracles impetrated through his intercession, fully resulted and still result, we have *proclaimed and defined him a Saint*, and we have decreed that he should be held and venerated as a Saint by all, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

By the same authority we have mercifully granted in perpetuity to all the Christian faithful who have devoutly visited, after true penance and confession, the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in the City of Rome every year on the 14th of July, of the aforementioned Congregation of Clerics Regular, in which the Body of the same Saint is preserved, the indulgence of seven years and as many quarantines on penance contracted by them or by others.

## **6. Epilogue of the Bull**

Let the Holy Church of God therefore exult and rejoice in the Lord, who according to his promises preserves and increases in her the spirit of holiness and love. May the Faithful be incited to follow in the precepts of this Saint, so that they may deserve to be sustained by his help. And since the Saint himself, in the Kingdom of beatitude into which neither weeping nor sorrow enters, can find no one to whom to direct the usual favours of his mercy, he will willingly endeavour by his intercession to relieve Us here placed in so many distresses and calamities and to remove from Us the scourges of Divine wrath.

## **7. Clauses, date, signatures**

In order that all the things set forth above may be known in every part for the consolation and edification of the Christian people, We have decided to make them public and to spread them with the content and authority of this Apostolic Letter. And We have given disposition that to the transpositions or printed copies of the same, signed by a Notary Public and bearing the seal of a person constituted in Ecclesiastical authority, the same credit be given by all as would be given to the present if it were exhibited or placed in public.

Let no person therefore be allowed to break this text that expresses Our definition, decree, ascription, mandate, statute, explanation and will, or with reckless intent to oppose it. If anyone dares to attempt this, let him know that he will meet with the indignation of Almighty God and His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given in Rome at the See of Peter in the year of the Incarnation of the Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty-six on the twenty-ninth day of June in the sixth year

of Our Pontificate.

✠ I Benedict, Bishop of the Catholic Church  
(The seal with the inscription: Sanctus Petrus - Sanctus Paulus - is affixed.  
Benedictus PP. XIV - Fiat pax in virtute tua).

✠ I T. Bishop of Ostia and Velletri Card. Rufus Dean  
and H.R.E. Vice-Chancellor.

✠ I A. Bishop Portuense, Card. of S. Clemente, H.R.E. Chamberlain.  
(the names of the other 34 Cardinals follow. Then).  
D. Card. Passioneus, J. Dataro

Place ✠ of Stamp  
Registered in the Secretariat of the Brevi.

Endorsement by the Curia: I. C. Woods  
j. B. Eugenio

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