

Healing of US man key to Italian priest's canonization

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Thanks to the healing of a young man from the United States, who was severely injured in a rollerblading accident, Italian Blessed Louis Guanella will be among three new saints proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI in late October.

William Glisson, now 30 and married, was 21 years old when he and a friend were rollerblading down the Baltimore Pike in Springfield, Pa., near Philadelphia. Glisson was skating backward, without a helmet, hit a hole and fell, hitting his head.

The young man was in a coma for nine days and underwent skull surgery twice, but the doctors' prognosis was still grave.

A family friend, Dr. Noreen M. Yoder, gave Glisson's mother two relics of Blessed Louis Guanella. Dr. Yoder worked at a rehabilitation center in Springfield run by the Opera Don Guanella.

According to the website of the Opera Don Guanella, Glisson was released from the hospital less than a month after the accident and returned to work just seven months later.

Glisson's healing was accepted by the Vatican as the miracle needed for Blessed Guanella's canonization, which is scheduled for Oct. 23.

The Italian priest lived 1842-1915 and founded the Servants of Charity, the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, and the Confraternity of St. Joseph, whose members pledge to pray for the sick and dying.

Also set for canonization Oct. 23 are: Italian Blessed Guido Maria Conforti, founder of the Xaverian Missionaries, who lived 1865-1931; and Spanish Blessed Bonifacia Rodriguez Castro, 1837-1905, founder of the Servants of St. Joseph, a congregation originally dedicated to educating poor women.

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