



News from the

Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach

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NEWS RELEASE

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THE PATH TO SAINTHOOD

THE LIFE OF ARCHBISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN TO BE CELEBRATED IN THE DIOCESE OF PALM BEACH

The Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach welcomes the Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Foundation from Peoria, Illinois to south Florida for two events in celebration of the life and holiness of the *Servant of God* Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen.

Monsignor Stanley Deptula, executive director of the Sheen Foundation and **Joan Sheen Cunningham**, niece of the late Archbishop Fulton Sheen will be special guests at the Cathedral of St. Ignatius Loyola in Palm Beach Gardens and St. Joan of Arc in Boca Raton on March 10th and 11th. **These events are free and open to the public. (Tuesday March 10th Cathedral of St. Ignatius, 9999 N. Military Trail, Palm Beach Gardens: 6:30 p.m. Mass, talk, reception & Wednesday March 11th St. Joan of Arc Church, 370 SW 3rd Street, Boca Raton Florida: 7:30 p.m. Mass, adoration, talk, reception)**

Millions across the globe remember the late Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen as a powerful preacher and prophet for this generation. He visited countless families in the 1930s – 1950s through the budding mediums of television and radio netting an Emmy Award and more than that, captivating countless hearts, attracting young and old to the truth of the Catholic faith. His television programs, which still air today, and his many writings, remain an inspiration to priests and lay people alike including those of other faiths. Many living in south Florida who personally knew Sheen and can attest to the holiness of the beloved Archbishop will be in attendance at the upcoming local events. Nearly 30 years after his death, the Vatican is currently considering his cause for sainthood. How does the Catholic Church determine sanctity? Monsignor Stanley Deptula will detail the process of becoming a saint as well as the two miracles currently under investigation at the Vatican. If canonized, Sheen would be the first American-born Bishop Saint here in the United States. The events in Palm Beach are one of many to occur nationally in promotion of the cause of beatification/canonization of Archbishop Fulton Sheen.

Fulton John Sheen (born **Peter John Sheen** May 8, 1895 – December 9, 1979) was an American Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church and a also a pioneer in the field of television evangelism captivating radio and television audiences from the 1930's to the 1950's to today. His cause for canonization for sainthood was officially opened in 2002 by Bishop Jenki of the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, and he is now referred to as a *Servant of God*.

Ordained a priest in 1919, Sheen quickly became a renowned theologian, earning the Cardinal Mercier Prize for International Philosophy in 1923. He went on to teach theology and philosophy as well as acting as a parish priest before being appointed Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of New York in 1951. He held this position until 1966 when he was made the Bishop of Rochester. Sheen held this position for three years before resigning and being made the Archbishop of the Titular See of Newport, Wales.

For twenty years he hosted the night-time radio programme *The Catholic Hour* (1930-1950) before moving to television and presenting *Life Is Worth Living* (1951-1957). Sheen's final presenting role was on the syndicated *The Fulton Sheen Program* (1961-1968) with a format very similar to that of the earlier *Life is Worth Living* show. Fulton Sheen received an Emmy Award for Most Outstanding Television Personality. Starting in 2009, his shows were being re-broadcast on the EWTN cable network.

Sheen was born in El Paso, Illinois, the oldest of four sons of a farmer. Though he was known as Fulton, his mother's maiden name, he was baptized as Peter John Sheen. As an infant, Sheen contracted tuberculosis. After the family moved to nearby Peoria, Illinois, Sheen's first role in the Roman Catholic Church was as an altar boy at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Sheen died of heart disease on December 9, 1979. He is buried in the crypt of St. Patrick's Cathedral, near the deceased Archbishops of New York. The official repository of Sheen's papers, television programs, and other materials is at St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry in Rochester, New York.

In 2002, Sheen's Cause for Canonization as a saint was officially opened, and so he is now referred to as a *Servant of God*. On February 2, 2008, the archives of Archbishop Sheen were sealed at a ceremony during a special Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Peoria, Illinois, where the diocese is sponsoring his canonization

Joseph Campanella introduces the re-runs of Sheen's various programs that are aired on EWTN. Re-runs are also aired on TBN. In addition to his television appearances, Archbishop Sheen can also be heard on Relevant Radio.

For more information about the events in the Diocese of Palm Beach please visit www.diocesepb.org

For more information about the Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Foundation visit www.sheencause.org

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