

Molding the Model Bishop from Trent to Vatican II

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The creation of new saints often has a political edge; the Catholic Church molds saints' lives to fit its needs, and individual popes have particular priorities in saint-making. In the early modern Church, this was particularly important after the Council of Trent. The Tridentine decrees (1563) instructed bishops to reform the Church but provided few practical suggestions for how to do this. One solution was to hold up exemplary post-Tridentine bishops as models through beatification and canonization. Historians have noted the importance of model bishops but have not fully considered the process of creating them and its implication for the histories of Catholic Reform and of canonization. The case of Cardinal-Bishop Gregorio Barbarigo of Padua (bp. 1664–1697) tells a complicated and interesting story about the intersection of Catholic Reform and canonization. Barbarigo was beatified in 1761 during the Catholic Enlightenment and was finally canonized in 1960, on the eve of the Second Vatican Council. Examining the construction of his image from 1699–1960, this article argues that the Catholic Church in both the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries molded Barbarigo into the model bishop needed at those particular times, in response to the issues facing contemporary bishops and clergy.

In the first few decades after the Council of Trent published its decrees in 1563, reforming bishops had little guidance for achieving the Council's lofty goals. The Tridentine decrees described ideals—a bishop who provided a strong example, a well-educated and disciplined clergy, and a well-informed and devout laity, all worshipping in properly maintained churches—but provided little in the way of practical suggestions for reform.¹ All bishops working on this reform program, which continued at least into the eighteenth century, thus had to find models they could follow to try to reform their dioceses. The need for models meant that the first generation of

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¹H.J. Schroeder, ed., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (Charlotte, NC: TAN, 1978). The fact that the Council was lacking in practical instructions has been noted by many historians, including Giuseppe Alberigo, "L'episcopato nel cattolicesimo post-tridentino," *Cristianesimo nella storia* 6, no. 1 (January–April 1985): 75; and Joseph Bergin, *Church, Society and Religious Change in France, 1580–1730* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 156.

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post-Tridentine bishops who were seen as successful were quickly lauded by the Church, and several were canonized, providing bishops with official exemplars of episcopal excellence. One thinks most often of Archbishop Carlo Borromeo of Milan (abp. 1564–1584) and Bishop François de Sales of Geneva (bp. 1602–1622), but there were others, such as Juan de Ribera, Alain de Solminihac, Jean-Baptiste Gault, and Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo, who were proposed as potential model bishop-saints in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.² The lives of these men, as reconstructed by their processes and hagiographers, filled in some of the gaps left by the Tridentine decrees.³

Scholarship on Catholic Reform has long recognized the importance of early Tridentine model bishops for the work of later reformers.⁴ Many bishops drew

²Ribera (archbishop of Valencia, 1568–1611) was beatified in 1796 and canonized in 1960; Solminihac's (bishop of Cahors, 1636–1659) process began in 1783 and he was beatified in 1981; Gault's (bishop of Marseille, 1642–1643) process began in 1643 and he was declared venerable in 1893; Mogrovejo (archbishop of Lima, 1579–1606) was beatified in 1679 and canonized in 1726.

³The concept that saints are constructed through the beatification and canonization processes is best explored by sociologists of religion. See Pierre Deloof, "Towards a Sociological Study of Canonized Sainthood in the Catholic Church," in *Saints and Their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore, and History*, ed. Stephen Wilson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 189–216. This concept, with regards to Tridentine bishop-saints, has been noted most often for Borromeo; Giuseppe Alberigo in particular has discussed the distortion of Borromeo the man for the creation of Borromeo the saint, noting that the model Borromeo was rather colorless but of immense significance for the post-Tridentine Church. See Giuseppe Alberigo, "From the Council of Trent to 'Tridentinism,'" in *From Trent to Vatican II: Historical and Theological Investigations*, ed. Raymond Bulman and Frederick Parella (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 28; and Giuseppe Alberigo, "Carlo Borromeo come modello di vescovo nella chiesa post-tridentina," *Rivista storica italiana* 79 (1967): 1036. For a more detailed discussion of the process of constructing Borromeo as saint, see Angelo Turchini, *La fabbrica di un santo: il processo di canonizzazione di Carlo Borromeo e la Controriforma* (Turin: Marietti, 1984). The idea that saints are sometimes constructed in a particular way for a specific purpose is explored (with particular focus on the canonizations celebrated by John Paul II) in Oliver Bennett, "Strategic Canonisation: Sanctity, Popular Culture and the Catholic Church," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 17, no. 4 (2011): 438–55.

⁴See, for example, Alberigo, "Carlo Borromeo come modello di vescovo nella chiesa post-tridentina"; Giuseppe Alberigo, "Carlo Borromeo Between Two Models of Bishop," in *San Carlo Borromeo: Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. John Headley and John Tomaro (Washington, D.C.: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1988), 250–63; Joseph Bergin, "The Counter-Reformation Church and Its Bishops," *Past and Present* 165 (November 1999): 30–73; Liliana Billanovich, "Gregorio Barbarigo fra antichi e nuovi modelli episcopali," *Ricerche di storia sociale e religiosa* 52 (1997): 7–30; Agostino Borromeo, "Archbishop Carlo Borromeo and the Ecclesiastical Policy of Phillip II in the State of Milan," in *San Carlo Borromeo: Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. John Headley and John Tomaro (Washington, DC: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1988), 85–111; Bruno Maria Bosatra, "Ancora sul vescovo ideale della riforma cattolica. I lineamenti del pastore tridentino-borromaico," *La scuola cattolica* 112 (1984): 517–79; Hubert Jedin and Giuseppe Alberigo, *Il tipo ideale di vescovo secondo la riforma cattolica* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1985); Alison Forrester, "Revisiting Sacred Propaganda: The Holy Bishop in the Seventeenth-Century Jansenist Quarrel," *Reformation & Renaissance*

heavily on Borromeo and de Sales, who provided two different models of episcopal excellence. Borromeo, especially as presented in hagiographic texts and through his synodal decrees, the *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, was the intransigent disciplinarian.⁵ De Sales, as described by hagiographers and as comes through in his writings, especially *The Introduction to the Devout Life*, was a model of love and pastoral care.⁶ Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo became the defender of orthodoxy, serving first as an inquisitor in Granada before moving to the archdiocese of Lima.⁷ Others, including Solminihac, Ribera, and Gault were portrayed as following elements of their predecessors.⁸ The images of these men were often oversimplified, but this was in itself part of the Church's strategy: a simpler model was a clear one. Bishops could study the work of their exemplary predecessors through their published texts or *vitae* and try the strategies best suited to their priorities and the needs of their dioceses. Although Borromeo, de Sales, and the other

Review 6, no. 1 (2004): 7–35; Alison Forrester, *Fathers, Pastors and Kings: Visions of Episcopacy in Seventeenth-Century France* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Alison Forrester, "A Catholic Model of Martyrdom in the Post-Reformation Era: The Bishop in Seventeenth-Century France," *The Seventeenth Century* 20, no. 2 (2005): 254–80; Ramon Robres Lluich, "S. Carlo Borromeo y sus relaciones con el episcopado iberico posttridentino," *Anthologica annua: publicaciones del Instituto Español de Estudios Eclesiásticos* 8 (1960): 83–141; Oliver Logan, "The Ideal of the Bishop and the Venetian Patriciate: c. 1430–c. 1630," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 29, no. 4 (October 1978): 415–50; A.D. Wright, "The Borromeo Ideal and the Spanish Church," in *San Carlo Borromeo: Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. John Headley and John Tomaro (Washington, DC: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1988), 188–207; and Danilo Zardin, "Tra continuità delle strutture e nuovi ideali di 'riforma': la riorganizzazione borromea della curia arcivescovile," in *Lombardia borromeaica, Lombardia spagnola 1554–1659*, ed. Paolo Pissavino and Gianvittorio Signorotto (Rome: Bulzoni, 1995), 695–764.

⁵For a balanced treatment of Borromeo, see Wietse de Boer, *The Conquest of the Soul: Confession, Discipline, and Public Order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Leiden: Brill, 2001). His *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis* was first published in 1582 and reprinted in 1583. Subsequent editions appeared in 1599, 1603, 1738, and 1754. See Enrico Cattaneo, "La singolare fortuna degli 'Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis,'" *La scuola cattolica* 111 (1983): 207. Several of these editions are digitized through Google Books.

⁶On de Sales, see Jill Fehleison, *Boundaries of Faith: Catholics and Protestants in the Diocese of Geneva* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2010). His *Introduction to the Devout Life* was first published in 1609 and revised in 1619. For a modern translation, see Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, trans. Michael Day (London: J.M. Dent, 1961). De Sales' approach to Catholicism and reform can also be seen in his letters; see Francis de Sales, *Letters to Persons in Religion*, trans. Benedict Mackey (Westminster: The Newman Bookshop, 1943); and Francis de Sales and Jane de Chantal, *Francis de Sales, Jane de Chantal: Letters of Spiritual Direction*, ed. Wendy M. Wright and Joseph F. Power (New York: Paulist, 1988).

⁷R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 124.

⁸On the image of Ribera, see Benjamin Ehlers, *Between Christians and Moriscos: Juan de Ribera and Religious Reform in Valencia, 1568–1614* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 152–53. On Gault and Solminihac, see Forrester, *Fathers, Pastors, and Kings*, 177, 202.

post-Tridentine bishop-saints followed different reform strategies, they did share devotion to the ideals of Trent, which they demonstrated through their personal attention to their diocese or archdiocese and their focus on the education and comportment of both clergy and laity. By officially canonizing some of these model bishops, the Church made it clear what models of reform it thought were most appropriate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The processes for beatification and canonization, which were overhauled and standardized in the seventeenth century, involved an in-depth examination of the proposed saint's (called a Servant of God once the process opened) life and works. This included reading their written texts, collecting witness testimonies, and reading hagiographic biographies, or *vitae*. Every element of these processes involved construction of some kind. The promoters of the process and the Congregation of Rites, who oversaw them, chose how to focus on and interpret the writings. Witnesses chose how to tell the stories. Finally, hagiographers chose what to highlight in their *vitae*. If the Congregation of Rites ultimately approved the process and the pope declared the Servant of God blessed or sanctified, then sermons and the construction of a cult of sanctity built an image of the new *beato* (blessed) or saint that affected how he or she was understood by the community of believers. This image was sometimes "so remodeled that nothing of the real original is left."⁹ This is not to say that the Church was just spinning stories to create saints, but it is rather a recognition that, as sociologists of religion have put it, saints were made by other people (the promoters and the papacy), for other people (members of the faith community) and thus reflect the society that created them.¹⁰ Saints were intercessors but also models of good behavior for the faithful, who were supposed to see something of themselves in the saints they venerated; this goal colored the way saints' stories were told.¹¹

Historians of both early modern and modern Catholicism have already made compelling arguments for the politicization of canonization.¹² Pushing off from

⁹Delooz, "Towards a Sociological Study of Canonized Sainthood in the Catholic Church," 195.

¹⁰Ibid., 196, 199; and Stephen Wilson, "Introduction," in *Saints and Their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore, and History*, ed. Stephen Wilson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 37.

¹¹For more on categories of saints, see Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, *Saints and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

¹²On early modern canonization, see, for example, Peter Burke, "How to Be a Counter-Reformation Saint," in *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 48–62; Clare Copeland, "Saints, Devotions and Canonisation in Early Modern Italy," *History Compass* 10, no. 3 (March 2012): 260–69; Clare Copeland, *Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi: The Making of a Counter-Reformation Saint* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Simon Ditchfield, "How Not to Be a Counter-Reformation Saint: The Attempted Canonization of Pope Gregory X, 1622–45," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 60 (November 1992): 379–422; Simon Ditchfield, "Tridentine Worship

the arguments of Peter Burke and sociologists of religion that we should consider saints as reflecting the values of the society that makes them, historians have examined the strategic ways in which saints are created to not just reflect but indeed actively promote particular models of religiosity.¹³ In some cases, saints were also perhaps created for clear political purposes; pressure from kings or particular partisan concerns could cause popes to privilege saints from certain regions or with certain characteristics. In the early modern period, this is reflected in the creation of more Spanish saints, starting in 1588 with the Franciscan lay brother Diego de Alcalá due to prompting from the Spanish monarchy. It is also evident in the canonization of Polish Dominican Hyacinth in 1594, whose canonization is seen as strategic for reinvigorating Polish Catholicism at a critical moment.¹⁴ In the modern era, the political implications of canonization are even clearer. Perhaps the best case is that of Margaret of Hungary, a thirteenth-century princess and Dominican nun who was finally canonized in 1943.¹⁵ As Gábor Barna argues, her case only gained real traction in the twentieth century, because Hungarians saw their country in a similar position to the thirteenth century, drawing parallels between Hungary in the midst of World War II

and the Cult of Saints,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, ed. R. Po-Chia Hsia (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 201–24; Simon Ditchfield, “«Historia magistra sanctitatis»? The Relationship between Historiography and Hagiography in Italy after the Council of Trent (1564–1742 ca.),” in *Nunc alia tempora, alii mores. Storici in età posttridentina*, ed. Massimo Firpo (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2005), 3–23; Simon Ditchfield, “Thinking with Saints: Sanctity and Society in the Early Modern World,” *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 3 (Spring 2009): 552–84; and Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal*, 122–37. For the twentieth century, see Gábor Barna, “The Central Celebration for the Canonization of Margaret of Hungary in January 1944,” in *Religion, Culture, Society: Yearbook of the MTA-SZTE Research Group for the Study of Religious Culture*, ed. Gábor Barna and Orsolya Gyöngyössi (Szeged: MTA-SZTE, 2016), 53–75; Nadine-Josette Chaline, “La spiritualité de Pie XI,” in *Achille Ratti pape Pie XI* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1996), 159–70; Valentina Ciciliot, “La strategia canonizzatrice di Pio XI (1922–1939) tra femminismo, Francia, e fascismo,” *Rivista di storia del cristianesimo* 11, no. 2 (2014): 419–450; Gábor Klaniczay and Alan Campbell, “Efforts at the Canonization of Margaret of Hungary in the Angevin Period,” *The Hungarian Historical Review* 2, no. 2 (2013): 313–40; Anne Morelli, “Exemples de vie chrétienne et modèles politiques: les saints de Jean-Paul II,” *International Review of Community Development* 26 (Fall 1991): 57–63; and Ugo Zuccarello, “Le canonizzazioni e beatificazioni di Giovanni Paolo II: Quale politica papale della santità,” *Società e storia* 109, no. 22 (2005): 541–560.

¹³Burke, “How to Be a Counter-Reformation Saint,” 48; Copeland, “Saints, Devotions and Canonisation in Early Modern Italy,” 264; Ditchfield, “Redefining Catholicism,” 213; and Ditchfield, «Historia magistra sanctitatis»? , 7.

¹⁴Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal*, 127; and Mícheál Mac Craith, “Early-Modern Catholic Self-Fashioning ‘Spanish Style’: Aspects of Tadhg Ó Cianáins Rome,” in *The Flight of the Earls/ Imeacht Na Niarlaí*, ed. David Finnegan, Éamonn Ó Ciardha, and Marie-Claire Peters (Derry: Guildhall, 2010), 158–59.

¹⁵For a discussion of her life and the early efforts to canonize Margaret, see Klaniczay and Campbell, “Efforts at the Canonization of Margaret of Hungary in the Angevin Period.”

and Hungary after the Mongol invasion.¹⁶ Historians have also focused particularly on two prolific saint-makers, Pius XI (r. 1922–1939) and John Paul II (r. 1978–2005).¹⁷ The former’s canonizations and beatifications clearly demonstrate his concerns about secularism and the rise of fascism.¹⁸ The latter focused on saints who could reinvigorate western Catholicism, provide models for non-western Catholics, fight against liberalizing sexual politics of the late twentieth century, and finally help to rehabilitate the image of the Church with regards to its inaction in World War II.¹⁹

For the post-Tridentine period, there is an oft-overlooked case that makes this method and process of construction abundantly clear not only for the early modern Church, but also for the Church in the twentieth century: the 1761 beatification and 1960 canonization of Gregorio Barbarigo, bishop of Padua from 1664–1697. Barbarigo’s visitation records clearly demonstrate that he was an incredibly devoted reformer whose dedication was recognized early in his career, and who died with fame of sanctity. He lived his life above moral reproach and worked tirelessly for the reform of his diocese, developing a well-considered plan for renewing Catholicism in the Veneto. On some metrics, he was also quite successful: his seminary was vast and one of the best in Europe,²⁰ he established catechism schools across his diocese,²¹ and he built a well-organized bureaucratic structure to help oversee his territory.²² On other levels, his record was less ideal: he adopted a merciful approach to discipline modeled after François de Sales, which proved ineffective against most bad priests. His records show a high rate of clerical neglect, moral failings, and even crimes, as well as a high rate of recidivism.²³ He also was embroiled in conflicts with his cathedral canons

¹⁶Barna, “The Central Celebration for the Canonization of Margaret of Hungary in January 1944,” 55.

¹⁷Pius XI beatified four hundred ninety-nine people and canonized thirty-four. John Paul II beatified one thousand three hundred twenty-nine and canonized four hundred eighty-three.

¹⁸Chaline, “La spiritualité de Pie XI”; and Ciciliot, “La strategia canonizzatrice di Pio XI.”

¹⁹Morelli, “Exemples de vie chrétienne”; and Zuccarello, “Le canonizzazioni e beatificazioni di Giovanni Paolo II.”

²⁰See Sebastiano Serena, *S. Gregorio Barbarigo e la vita spirituale e culturale nel suo seminario di Padova*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Padua: Antenore, 1963).

²¹Ireneo Daniele, “S. Gregorio Barbarigo,” in *Diocesi di Padova*, ed. Pierantonio Gios, vol. 6, *Storia religiosa del Veneto* (Padua: Gregoriana, 1996), 263.

²²See Liliana Billanovich, *Fra centro e periferia*, vol. 1, 9 vols., *San Gregorio Barbarigo - Fonti e ricerche* (Padua: Istituto per la storia ecclesiastica padovana, 1993).

²³On de Sales’ influence on Barbarigo, see Pierluigi Giovannucci, “Aspetti e problemi emergenti dalla corrispondenza del Barbarigo con i Gesuiti,” in *«Gesuiti desiderosissimi del suo servizio»*. *Le relazioni epistolari tra Gregorio Barbarigo e la Compagnia di Gesù*, ed. Pierluigi Giovannucci, vol. 9, *San Gregorio Barbarigo—Fonti e ricerche* (Padua: Istituto per la storia ecclesiastica padovana, 2016), LXVII. Barbarigo’s visitation and episcopal inquisition records, preserved in the Archivio della Curia Vescovile di Padova (henceforth ACVP), *Visitationes* b. 30–66 and *Inquisitiones* b. 84–88, contain over six hundred instances of problematic priests; at least fifty priests were investigated more than once.

over jurisdiction and rights, which were dealt with by secular courts in Venice, requiring periodic absences from his diocese.²⁴ Most troublingly, he nearly died in despair. On his deathbed he lamented that he had not been able to stop his flock of a quarter of a million people from sinning, crying out “Oh me, Oh me, such fear! . . . I do not know what will become of me. Oh, how many sins, how many sins are on me! . . . What a severe count!”²⁵ Eventually Barbarigo’s auditor and friend managed to console him, and he reportedly died in peace, having come perilously close to the mortal sin of dying in despair. Despite these and a few other challenges, Barbarigo was beatified relatively quickly in 1761, only sixty-four years after his death. He was declared a “New Borromeo,” a model bishop for the Enlightenment Catholic Church, which was still undergoing reform. His canonization trial, stalled by a variety of factors and lacking sufficient miracles, was finally approved in 1960. At this point Barbarigo was recast as a “modern model prelate” just in time for the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, making Barbarigo again a model bishop for a new phase of reforms.²⁶

Barbarigo’s case is important for the light it sheds on a *longue durée* understanding of Catholic Reform, which stretched from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, as well as for what it can tell us about the politics of canonization. While historians have already established the political elements of canonization, Barbarigo’s case is relatively unusual, both in its timeline and in terms of Barbarigo’s status in the Church.²⁷ Between 1588 and 2017, just under one hundred saints were canonized more than two and a half centuries after their death, making them roughly comparable to Barbarigo.²⁸ Most were long forgotten and eventually promoted for beatification and canonization in relatively quick succession; only eight were beatified less than a century after their death, and only twenty-three were beatified within two hundred years of their death. Barbarigo’s case, on the other hand, was

²⁴See Gregorio Barbarigo, *Governare la diocesi nei conflitti: lettere di Gregorio Barbarigo ai familiari, 1671–1676*, ed. Catia Magni, vol. 7, 9 vols., San Gregorio Barbarigo - Fonti e ricerche (Padua: Istituto per la storia ecclesiastica padovana, 2011).

²⁵Giuseppe Musocco, *Delle azioni e virtù di Gregorio Barbarigo cardinal e vescovo di Padova*, Biblioteca Civica di Padova, M.S. BP 609, fol. 260r-v: “Oimè, Oimè, quanto terrore! . . . non so che sarà di me. O quanti peccati, quanti peccati sono sopra di me?... Quel strettissimo conto!”

²⁶*Atti della canonizzazione di S. Gregorio Barbarigo*, Bollettino diocesano di Padova (Padua: Tipografia Antoniana, 1960), 466.

²⁷Barbarigo was beatified sixty-four years after his death, and then it took another one hundred ninety-nine years for him to be canonized (total of two hundred sixty-three years from death to canonization). Most cases would not survive this long, particularly when we take into consideration Barbarigo’s status as a secular cleric.

²⁸I have excluded martyrs from this list, in an effort to find cases more comparable with Barbarigo’s. A list of all saints canonized between 1588 and 1999 is found in the appendix of Jacalyn Duffin, *Medical Miracles: Doctors, Saints, and Healing in the Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 198–207.

sporadically active from immediately after his death until 1960. More significantly, the vast majority of these cases were for members of regular and mendicant orders. Only seven secular clerics and thirteen laypeople are found in this group.²⁹ This suggests that the sustained devotion and support of an order is key for keeping a process going over centuries; indeed, with few exceptions the laity and secular clergy in this group were beatified and canonized in fairly rapid succession.³⁰ Only one case in this group is roughly comparable: that of Juan de Ribera, the archbishop of Valencia, who was also promoted as a model Tridentine bishop. His beatification process took longer than Barbarigo's, concluding only in 1796, one hundred eighty-five years after his death in 1611. He was canonized two weeks after Barbarigo in 1960. Like Barbarigo, Ribera had his story retold and reshaped over the centuries to suit political concerns and fashions within the Church, and he too was held up as a model for the reforming twentieth-century Church by Pope John XXIII.³¹ However, Barbarigo's more rapid beatification suggests that his process faced fewer challenges, making his the best test case; Ribera's promoters in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries struggled to spin his expulsion of the *moriscos* in particular.³² By looking closely at Barbarigo's more than two hundred fifty year process towards sainthood, we can better understand the shifting political aims of both his promoters and the Catholic Church, as both groups tried to make the bishop fit contemporary ideals.

I. SAINT-MAKING SINCE THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Although it is clear that the various religious entities involved in canonization processes and the creation of hagiographies had always used their discretion to construct a particular image of individual saints, in the seventeenth century the Church became more explicitly controlling of the process of recognizing new saints. In 1625, Pope Urban VIII issued decrees on beatification and

²⁹Six of the laypeople were royals or nobles, two were indigenous, one was a prominent mystic, and four were poor people. Of the secular clergy, only three were members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (Barbarigo, Juan de Ribera, and François de Laval, all bishops).

³⁰Time from beatification to canonization for laypeople and secular clergy was under a century for all cases except those of Nicholas de Flue, a Swiss mystic beatified in 1669 and canonized in 1947; Kinga, a Hungarian princess beatified in 1690 and canonized in 1999; Jan Sarkander, a Silesian priest beatified in 1860 and canonized in 1995; Juan de Ribera, a Spanish archbishop beatified in 1796 and canonized in 1960; and Gregorio Barbarigo.

³¹Ehlers, *Between Christians and Moriscos*, 152–53; Angelo Roncalli, “Discurso de su santidad Juan XXIII a los peregrinos españoles con motivo de la canonización del Beato Juan de Ribera” (Libreria editrice vaticana, June 12, 1960), <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/es/speeches/1960/>; and Angelo Roncalli, “Canonización del Beato Juan de Ribera. Homilía de su santidad Juan XXIII” (Libreria editrice vaticana, June 12, 1960), <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/es/homilies/1960/>.

³²Ehlers, *Between Christians and Moriscos*, 152–153.

canonization that reserved the authority for both processes to the pope and laid down a specific procedure that was largely unchanged until the papacy of John Paul II.³³ Most post-Tridentine bishop-saints were canonized under these new rules; Carlo Borromeo, canonized in 1610, is the notable exception. The new rules stipulated that no one could be beatified if a public cult of sanctity already existed, as this challenged papal authority, and thus the first phase of beatification determined if veneration had already begun.³⁴ Assuming no cult existed, the next phase was an investigation into the virtues of and miracles performed by the Servant of God.³⁵ For beatification, at least two miracles were required, while four—with eyewitnesses—were preferred; most cases presented many more.

Once the local promoters compiled the testimonies, they sent everything to Rome to be examined by the Congregation of Sacred Rites, staffed by cardinals and other officials. The crucial figure at this stage was the promoter of the faith, often called the “devil’s advocate.” His task was to raise doubts about the case to ensure the Church did not make a mistake in the recognition of new saints. His doubts, called *animadversiones*, were sent to the promoters of the case for the apostolic process. This stage was overseen by a member of the Congregation of Rites and involved collecting more testimonies, typically focused on miracles and often included the exhumation of the Servant of God’s body. The new testimonies and responses to the *animadversiones* were returned to Rome for examination and hopefully approval. If the Congregation approved, the case went to the pope, who could finally issue a decree of beatification. This could not take place until fifty years had passed since the Servant of God’s death, though in some cases this could be accelerated.

Once recognized as blessed, public rituals and the development of a cult began. The initial promotion of the cult was typically local or regional, and if the *beato* continued to perform miracles for his devotees, the process for canonization could begin. Local promoters first collected testimonies to at

³³Michael Ott, “Pope Urban VIII,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 15 (New York: Robert Appleton, 1912), newadvent.org. John Paul II changed the process in 1983, making it much easier to create new saints (and allowing him to create more saints than any pope before him). Bennett, “Strategic Canonisation: Sanctity, Popular Culture and the Catholic Church,” 443.

³⁴The entire process is described in great detail by Prospero Lambertini, who was the promoter of the faith for the Congregation of Rites until becoming Pope Benedict XIV in 1740. Prospero (Pope Benedict XIV) B. X. Lambertini, *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione* (Vatican City: Libreria editrice vaticana, 2010).

³⁵Requirements are different for martyrs, because their heroic virtue is established by their willingness to die for the faith and they are not required to perform miracles. Other Servants of God must have surpassed ordinary faithful in terms of faith, hope, charity, fortitude, justice, prudence, and temperance; other virtues may be added, and members of religious orders are also expected to be exemplary in their fidelity to their vows. Delooy, “Towards a Sociological Study of Canonized Sainthood in the Catholic Church,” 203.

least two more miracles, along with new hagiographic texts and other evidence of the cult's continuing vivacity, which they sent to Rome for the Congregation's approval. Next the pope would solicit opinions from certain bishops and could also ask for a vote from all cardinals resident in Rome. If they supported the case, it went before a secret consistory comprised mostly of cardinals, followed by a semi-public consistory that included bishops. With all this advice, the pope would finally decide. In some cases, however, the pope could bypass most or all of the process using equipollent canonization, in which papal prerogative overrode the usual requirements.³⁶ Typically this was reserved for saints of the early Church, for whom it was difficult or impossible to collect the necessary evidence, but it could also be used on other prospective saints, as happened in Barbarigo's case. Canonization, by either method, was both a recognition of the sanctity of the individual and a declaration to all Catholics that they should venerate the individual as a saint; the cult was supposed to spread beyond local boundaries and became a part of the liturgical calendar. This is the process Barbarigo underwent from 1699–1960, despite aspects of his episcopacy that might have made him a questionable candidate.

II. THE BEATIFICATION OF GREGORIO BARBARIGO

Gregorio Barbarigo died with fame of sanctity in 1697, and by 1699, the official beatification process began, driven primarily by the Paduan clergy, though with the general support of at least the urban laypeople.³⁷ The promoters of Barbarigo's case took four years to complete the trial to demonstrate no cult existed and began collecting testimonies about his virtues in 1704. Witnesses from across the Venetian territory were called to testify to Barbarigo's virtue, charity, customs, clemency, chastity, faith, justice, prudence, hope, strength, and patience.³⁸

The construction of Barbarigo's image began in this initial phase. Witnesses discussed two facets of Barbarigo's image: Barbarigo as model Catholic and Barbarigo as model bishop. Many witnesses, who were often ordinary

³⁶Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione," *Apollinaris* 48 (1975): 222–45.

³⁷The beatification and canonization processes are explored in detail in Pierluigi Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione del Card. Gregorio Barbarigo* (Rome: Herder, 2001), 60. The primary archival sources for the beatification process are ACVP, *Processo Barbarigo*, bb. 1–12; and Archivio Segreto Vaticano (henceforth ASV), *Congregazione dei Riti, Processus*, bb. 3458–3464, 3466–3480. The canonization trial, in ASV, *Congregazione dei Riti, Processus*, b. 5404, is not available as access is denied to all Vatican archival documents produced since 1939.

³⁸Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 198. Giovannucci provides a table detailing the percentage of questions dedicated to each virtue.

laypeople or rural priests, had only a limited understanding of what might make Barbarigo a model bishop and placed a premium on his mercy, charity, and kindness—virtues that made him a good Catholic and pastor but not necessarily a good bishop. But in the end, the official narrative of Barbarigo as *beato*, and much later as saint, held him up not as a model of virtuous charity and asceticism to be followed by the average Catholic but as a model of episcopal best practices.

The witnesses and promoters of the case focused on admirable qualities and glossed over lackluster results. One witness recalled Barbarigo's treatment of a priest who served his parish for over two decades despite several investigations into his poor behavior, which included suspiciously only teaching catechism to girls, wearing inappropriate vestments, illicit relationships with women, and bullying of parishioners.³⁹ The witness, a priest from a nearby village, recalled that Barbarigo's admonition of this priest was delivered

with such softness and with expressions so benign that I was provoked to tears, together with the other onlookers. The priest was on his feet in a very proud manner that aroused contempt in the same bystanders, and the Servant of God continued with the same sweetness to reproach him to correct his mistakes. Finally in order to serve Justice he had to suspend him, though not long after, being humbled, he returned to his benefice. But persevering, he returned again to his transgressions, and the Servant of God was forced to be more rigorous, punishing him with prison for some time.⁴⁰

Here, as with other cases, Barbarigo's mercy was praised, but the fact that parishioners lived with a scandalous priest for over twenty years was ignored.

Many witnesses spoke of Barbarigo's mercy, but some added another layer likely to appeal to the Church: Barbarigo dealt with errant clerics quietly, they said, to avoid scandal. According to another priest who testified, Barbarigo's priority was suppressing scandals in the diocese, which meant he was reluctant to hold formal trials for bad priests. The witness quoted Barbarigo as having said that "when a priest is tried he loses his reputation, conception, and esteem, and nothing can be done to recover it, and therefore [Barbarigo]

³⁹ACVP, *Inquisitiones*, b. 84, fols. 340v-376r; b. 87 (n.p.); *Visitationes*, b. 55, fols. 312-317; b. 60, fols. 409r-413r.

⁴⁰ACVP, *Processo Barbarigo*, b. 9, fol. 1697r: "*L'ho udito a correggere uno di quei Parochi et era il Pievano di S. Illaria D. Carlo Rodriguez, col tal soavità e con espressioni si benigne che mi provocò alle lagrime, unitamente cogl'astanti, e pur il Re[verend]o se ne stava in piedi con modo assai superbo così che moveva lo sdegno nelli stessi circostanti, et il Servo di Dio continuò sempre con l'istessa dolcezza a rimproverarli li suoi difetti acciò li emendassi, finalmente per adempire alle parti della sua Giustitia dovette sospenderlo, se bene non molto doppo per essersi quello humiliato lo rimise al beneficio. Ma perseverando è ritornato di nuovo alle trasgressioni fù constretto il Servo di Dio a servirsi del rigore castigandolo con la Carcere per qualche tempo.*"

used all his power to end abuses secretly.”⁴¹ Ideally priests would neither offend nor cause scandal—Giuseppe Musocco, author of the first *vita* of Barbarigo, wrote of the bishop that “not only could he not tolerate the sin, but even the suspicion of sin in ecclesiastics was intolerable.”⁴² But when they inevitably did cause problems, Barbarigo did not want to make things worse with public trial or punishment. The concern for the danger of scandal was widespread among the Church hierarchy, as they believed scandals could cause people to lose faith. Neither Barbarigo nor his colleagues seem to have connected this gentle correction to the problem of repeat offenses that could leave parishes ill-served (and, ironically, scandalized by the Church’s inaction). From their perspective, a model bishop who was milder in correction than the famous disciplinarian Carlo Borromeo was what the Church needed at that time.

Witnesses also described Barbarigo’s more straightforward virtues: his charity, his extreme adherence to his vows of chastity and poverty, as well as his devotion to lay and clerical education.⁴³ Some of these qualities made him a positive role model for bishops, while others were more general characteristics of Christian piety and charity. Witnesses often vividly described the state of his clothing, which was unusually decrepit for a man of his social status. One priest recalled that Barbarigo “had trousers that were so lacerated, and so old that I, the poor curate of Oliero as I was at that time, would have been embarrassed to wear them.”⁴⁴ Another described his clothing as heavily patched up, “unable to protect him from the cold.”⁴⁵ Unlike most members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and nobility, who used their positions to justify a luxurious lifestyle, Barbarigo had no use for such vanities. There was no doubt that his personal life had been one of holy deprivation and self-discipline, living up to the Tridentine ideal.

Others praised Barbarigo for his exceptional devotion to education, a necessary interest for a model Tridentine bishop. A member of the episcopal curia described how he first met the bishop as a boy; he won a catechism medal during a pastoral visitation and was offered the chance to study at the seminary, which started an impressive career that led to a post in the

⁴¹ACVP, *Processo Barbarigo*, b. 6, fol. 456r: “Dicendo quando un sacerdote era processato perdeva la fama, il concetto, e la stima e che egli non era più instato di ricuperarla, e perciò usava tutto il potere nel fare che secretamente si levassero dal male.”

⁴²Musocco, *Delle azioni e virtù di Gregorio Barbarigo cardinal e vescovo di Padova*, fol. 103v: “Non poteva nell’Ecclesiastici tollerare non che la colpa, ma neppure il sospetto della colpa.”

⁴³On the testimonies, found in ASV, *Congregazione dei Riti*, bb. 3471–3475, see Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 238–317.

⁴⁴ACVP, *Processo Barbarigo*, b. 6, fol. 768r: “Haveva li calzoni tutti laceri, e tanto vecchi che io, pover curato di Oliero come ero in quel tempo, mi sarei vergognato di portarli.”

⁴⁵ACVP, *Processo Barbarigo*, b. 9, fol. 1205v: “Habiti particolarmente molto laceri e rattopati, inhabili a guardarlo dal freddo.”

episcopal curia. He saw his trajectory as influenced by Barbarigo's devotion to catechism and establishment of an excellent seminary.⁴⁶ Many others described their studies at the schools Barbarigo founded or praised his devotion to providing catechism to every parish.

In the end, the promoters collected three hundred thirteen testimonies that painted a picture of a man of incredible virtue, charity, and mercy while also extolling Barbarigo's episcopal career as a devoted reformer.⁴⁷ In 1716, the testimonies, supporting letters, and Barbarigo's writings were sent to the Congregation of Sacred Rites. Prospero Lambertini, the promoter of the faith and future Pope Benedict XIV, responded in 1722 with his *animadversiones*.

Although impressed by the diligence shown by the promoters, Lambertini issued three serious challenges to Barbarigo's case.⁴⁸ He first questioned the paucity of Barbarigo's writings; the promoters had sent only his published *Lettere pastorali, editti e decreti* of 1690, and a prospective saint's writings were extremely important as they were considered revealing of the author's true persona.⁴⁹ Next, Lambertini expressed concern about the absenteeism that occurred each time Barbarigo went to Venice because of his conflict with the cathedral canons.⁵⁰ Finally, Lambertini questioned the legitimacy of beatifying someone who had nearly died in despair.⁵¹

The promoters scrambled to respond. They sent Barbarigo's breviary and other books with marginalia, authenticated by a notary, and explained that the Servant of God had left no theological or doctrinal treatises or other official writings.⁵² To combat the charge of absenteeism, a clear violation of Tridentine decrees, the promoters presented four papal pardons, issued between 1684 and 1692, which excused the bishop from all absences.⁵³ Finally, to counter the concern about Barbarigo's death, the promoters noted

⁴⁶ACVP, *Processo Barbarigo*, b. 9, fol. 1225r.

⁴⁷Of the three hundred thirteen witnesses, one hundred twenty-six were laypeople, one hundred eighty-seven were clergy. For a more detailed breakdown of the sex and status of witnesses, see Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 205, 210.

⁴⁸"Animadversiones," in *Sacra Rituum Congregatione Eminentissimo, & Reverendissimo D. Card. Zondadario Veneta, seu Patavina Beatificationis, & Canonizationis ven. Servi Dei Gregorii card. Barbadii Episcopi olim Bergomensis, postea Patavini, Positio Super dubio An sit Signanda Commissio Introductionis Causae* (henceforth *Positio 1723*) (Rome: Typis Reverendae Camerae Apostolicae, 1723), 2.

⁴⁹"Animadversiones," in *Positio 1723*, 1–2. The text the promoters originally sent was Gregorio Barbarigo, *Lettere pastorali, editti, e decreti publicati in diversi tempi dall'eminissimo e reverendissimo Sig. Gregorio Barbarigo Vescovo di Padova* (Padua: Seminario di Padova, 1690). This text is a collection of pastoral letters, edicts, and decrees sent to priests and sermons delivered at synods. On the importance of the prospective saint's writings, see Delooz, "Towards a Sociological Study of Canonized Sainthood in the Catholic Church," 202.

⁵⁰"Animadversiones," in *Positio 1723*, 2–4.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 4.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 2–3.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 6–7, and "Responsio facti et iuris ad animadversiones," in *Positio 1723*, 13.

that a final struggle with the devil was not uncommon and compared him to the anchorite Saint Hilarion, who had also struggled with this fear.⁵⁴

The promoters sent their response in 1723, and in 1724, they began the apostolic process, which focused on Barbarigo's miracles. The promoters exhumed Barbarigo's body and over the next two decades collected more testimonies, carried out in the presence of the Congregation of Rites' representative. Although the promoters eventually managed to turn the exhumation to their favor, the medical examination did not go as expected. In 1725, the Paduan bishop ordered Barbarigo's body removed from its lead-lined casket for display, autopsy, and translation to a new marble tomb in the cathedral.⁵⁵ The body was examined by two medical professors from the University of Padua, Antonio Vallisneri and Giovanni Battista Morgagni, with the assistance of two surgeons.⁵⁶ The four practitioners were given two days to submit written reports in which they were to decide whether the state of the body was miraculous, a demand that proved difficult.

The doctors faced extreme pressure to declare the body incorrupt. Failure to do so could leave them as public enemies, jeopardize their positions at the university, and open them to disapproval by the Church. Yet they were hesitant to say it was miraculous. Vallisneri had already protested in a letter to a friend that the question was moot as Barbarigo's body had been embalmed, but when he saw the body, he faced even greater problems. He wrote to the same friend that "we did not find him in such a good state."⁵⁷ They found the corpse to be blackened (whereas an incorrupt corpse would have been rosy and life-like) but qualified this with statements that the condition was not so bad given the poor embalming techniques and the heat and humidity to which the body had been subjected. They also noted the good state of Barbarigo's head and the pleasant odor that emanated from the body, considered a sign of sanctity. But they demurred on the question of

⁵⁴Ibid., 14. Jean-Michel Sallmann has also noted that this was a common part of many saints' stories; true saints would always resist, though they might appear to be "in agony fight[ing] against the demons to find peace." Jean-Michel Sallmann, *Santi barocchi: modelli di santità, pratiche devozionali e comportamenti religiosi nel regno di Napoli dal 1540 al 1750* (Lecce: Argo, 1996), 371. See also Dominique-Marie Dautet, "Le récit de la «mort sainte» dans les biographies religieuses du XIX^e-XX^e siècle. Essai d'hagiographie contemporaine," *Analecta Bollandiana* 123, no. 1 (2005): 133–63.

⁵⁵Charles-Louis Richard and Jean Joseph Giraud, "Gregorio Barbarigo," in *Biblioteca sacra ovvero dizionario universale delle scienze ecclesiastiche*, vol. 3 (Milan: Editore Ranieri Fanfani, 1831), 103.

⁵⁶Vallisneri was the Chair of Practical and Theoretical Medicine at Padua, while Morgagni is considered the father of modern anatomical pathology. Bradford Bouley, "Negotiated Sanctity: Incorruption, Community, and Medical Expertise," *The Catholic Historical Review* 102, no. 1 (2016): 20. See also Bradford Bouley, *Pious Postmortems: Anatomy, Sanctity, and the Catholic Church in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), chap. 3.

⁵⁷Bouley, "Negotiated Sanctity: Incorruption, Community, and Medical Expertise," 21.

miraculous incorruption. Morgagni stated that “a miracle is a work which is in all ways perfect,” but he said that Barbarigo’s body “was not perfect in every way.” The doctors ultimately decided to call the body “wondrous” and left the interpretation of this to theologians, who were better qualified to judge a miracle.⁵⁸

This ambiguity was interpreted in different ways by the parties involved. Paduans, led by their cardinal-bishop, declared him incorrupt and placed his corpse on display in the Cathedral, where it remains to this day. The Congregation of Rites ultimately agreed, but carefully excised the details of the physicians’ reports from the official record. The published position of 1746 stated that “the body of the Servant of God, thirty years after his death, was conserved whole, incorrupt, and in every part flexible, even though it was buried in a very humid place.”⁵⁹ The document mentions that the body was examined by four doctors, but fails to name them, perhaps in a further attempt to distance the process from the medical doubts.

While the medical professionals in Padua were carefully dancing around the issue of incorruptibility in an attempt to protect their careers, reputations, and integrity, the promoters of Barbarigo’s case were collecting more testimony in Venice and Padua to further support Barbarigo’s saintly image. This portion of the process focused on Barbarigo’s conversions of heretics and infidels and on the miracles he had performed both in life and after death.

Barbarigo’s success in converting more than two dozen people to Catholicism was considered evidence of his incredible faith and also of God’s favor.⁶⁰ As bishop of Bergamo, he had managed to convert soldiers who were encamped in the city during the War of Candia.⁶¹ In Padua, a city with a Jewish ghetto, he succeeded in converting several Jews as well as a number of Protestants and Muslims; two of these converts testified.⁶² One was a woman named Elisabetta Valiera, who emigrated from Cairo to Padua at the age of sixteen with her six-month-old daughter.⁶³ According to her testimony, she asked Barbarigo to be her guide in the Catholic religion, and he took her under his wing. He sent her to a Discalced Carmelite friar for

⁵⁸Ibid., 22.

⁵⁹*Sacra Rituum Congregatione, Posito Super Dubio An constet de Virtutibus Theologicalibus Fide, Spe & Charitate in Deum, & Proximum, necnon Cardinalibus Prudentia, Iustitia, Fortitudine, & Temperantia, earumque annexis in gradu heroico in casu & c., & ad effectum & c.* (henceforth *Positio 1746*) (Rome: Typis Reverendae Camerae Apostolicae, 1746), 452. “*Corpus Servi Dei, post triginta ferme annos ab eius obitu, integrum, incorruptum, ac in omni sui parte flexibile conservatur; licet in loco valde humido tumulatum fuerit.*”

⁶⁰ASV, *Congregazione dei Riti, Processus*, b. 3476, fol. 166v.

⁶¹Ibid., fol. 168r.

⁶²Ibid., fols. 168v–169r.

⁶³She did not declare her natal faith, and other witnesses alternately identified her as converting from Islam or Judaism.

catechism, baptized her, undertook some of her religious education personally, and provided for her temporal needs. Once she was baptized, he provided her with an annual sum of money for support, which she continued to receive after his death. He also had her daughter raised in a convent, and when she was old enough, he allowed her to choose religious or married life. She chose to marry, and Barbarigo provided her with a dowry, found her a husband, and gave the man a job in the episcopal household. Elisabetta had nothing but praise for the kindness and generosity of the man who had brought her into the Christian fold and provided for her and her daughter's needs.⁶⁴

The other convert who testified had joined the Catholic Church from the Paduan Ghetto and expressed similar admiration for the bishop. His name was Gregorio Gradenigo, and he had decided to convert to Christianity at the age of twenty. Barbarigo housed him in the episcopal palace and had his auditor provide catechism instruction, and then found a prominent godfather in Girolamo Gradenigo, then the *podestà*, or Venetian governor, of Padua. Barbarigo performed the baptism in the cathedral to great pomp and circumstance and then offered the neophyte a job in the episcopal household; he became so close to the bishop that he was in the room when Barbarigo died and was granted the honor of closing his eyes. Soon after his own conversion, Gregorio Gradenigo asked Barbarigo to convert his seven-year-old sister, who was taken to a Benedictine convent, baptized, and educated. When she decided to become a nun, Barbarigo made all the arrangements and paid for her entry, and then left her a small maintenance sum in his will.⁶⁵

The evidence of Barbarigo's miracles, both during his career and after his death, were even more important to his beatification process than the conversions. Urban VIII's regulations required at least two miracles, preferably documented by eyewitnesses. Witnesses in this process testified to at least ten miracles Barbarigo performed while living and over forty posthumous miracles. During his life, he was supposedly threatened twice by falling rocks while on visitations—once in Bergamo and once in Padua; these miracles demonstrated his dedication to visiting even remote

⁶⁴ASV, *Congregazione dei Riti, Processus*, b. 3477, fol. 1206v–1214r.

⁶⁵ASV, *Congregazione dei Riti, Processus*, b. 3478, fols. 149r–150r. Barbarigo's methods of conversion are quite similar to those followed elsewhere in the Church (provide for the convert's temporal needs, education, and continuing support after conversion), though in larger cities this role was overseen by catechumen houses. See Peter Mazur, *Conversion to Catholicism in Early Modern Italy* (New York: Routledge, 2016); and Matteo Al Kalak and Ilaria Pavan, *Un'altra fede. Le case dei catecumeni nei territori estensi (1538–1938)* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2013). On Barbarigo's conversions, see Michele Cassese, "Gregorio Barbarigo e il rapporto con ebrei e non cattolici," in *Gregorio Barbarigo: patrizio veneto, vescovo, e cardinale nella tarda Controriforma (1625–1697)*, ed. Liliana Billanovich and Pierantonio Gios, vol. 3/2, 9 vols., San Gregorio Barbarigo—Fonti e ricerche (Padua: Istituto per la storia ecclesiastica padovana, 1999), 1023–56.

mountainous parishes.⁶⁶ Both times, a rockslide began, and large boulders headed straight for the bishop's retinue. Barbarigo made the sign of the cross over the threatening stones, causing those in Bergamo to change direction and those in Padua to split into pieces. The Paduan stones did not entirely miss the party—one piece nearly hit the bishop, and another struck a horse carrying a priest; the horse was injured, but the man escaped unharmed even though he was presumed dead when the horse collapsed.⁶⁷ The other miracles Barbarigo performed all helped his flock: he brought rain in a drought and healed various ill and injured laypeople with his prayers.⁶⁸ On two occasions, his prayer was not even needed; indirect contact with his person was sufficient. A nun with a crippled knee kneeled on a prayer cushion previously used by Barbarigo and found herself healed, and a woman suffering from breast cancer grabbed at his vestments, pressed them to her breast, and found her illness instantly cured.⁶⁹

The apostolic process focused more on the posthumous miracles, particularly those that had occurred recently, to demonstrate the local devotion to and efficacy of the Servant of God. The Venetian apostolic process of 1727 lists about forty miracles and ends with a statement that they had not provided a complete list.⁷⁰ As was common (and still is) in these processes, all were healing miracles of injured or ill people, both children and adults, clergy and laypeople. Each had visited Barbarigo's tomb or had contact with his former possessions or items that had touched his body, which effected instantaneous or remarkably rapid cures.⁷¹ When doctors were unable to cure them, they turned to Barbarigo, sometimes even at the physician's suggestion. Two modes of connecting with the Servant of God were typically used: people either touched a piece of cloth (usually a handkerchief that had touched Barbarigo's body or a piece of his clothing) to the afflicted part of their body or they consumed a few threads of Barbarigo's clothing, sometimes mixed with holy water.

In order to satisfy the requirements of the Congregation of Rites and lend greater credence to these miraculous tales, the promoters of the case

⁶⁶A later hagiography expresses some doubt that there were two episodes. Giuseppe Alessi, *Vita del B. Gregorio Barbarigo, Cardinale di SRCE Vescovo di Padova* (Padua: Tipografia del Seminario, 1897).

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 98–99, 124.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 98, 124–28.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 210–11, 222.

⁷⁰ASV, *Congregazione dei Riti, Processus*, b. 3476, fols. 294r–340v.

⁷¹As Jacalyn Duffin has noted, medical miracles far outnumber other miracles in beatification and canonization trials from the sixteenth–twentieth centuries. The standards for accepting these miracles is strict: medical professionals must testify that the cure could not have been natural, either because it was too rapid or because the illness or injury had been judged fatal. See Duffin, *Medical Miracles*.

interviewed many witnesses, including doctors who had attempted medical remedies for the various afflictions and had deemed the cases hopeless. In many cases, the illnesses seemed supernatural themselves. Several witnesses testified about the case of Lucrezia Piazzola, a nun who suffered from an increasingly overactive bladder. At first, according to her fellow nuns, she produced a moderately abnormal quantity of urine (described as four pounds per day), but her indisposition grew daily, until she was producing one hundred sixteen pounds of urine per day.⁷² According to the abbess, the doctors collected, observed, and even tasted her urine, noticing that it contained small organisms that looked like worms, did not taste normal, and was cold. They were unable to provide her any relief, and finally the doctor suggested that she try a spiritual remedy. The doctor gave her a few threads from the bishop's hat or robes to consume, but the nuns had little faith in her recovery until they found her the next morning "healthy, happy, and with good coloring."⁷³ Suor Lucrezia told them that overnight "the Venerable Signore Cardinal Barbarigo had appeared in a vision with the most Blessed Virgin . . . and he asked her if she desired her health, and when she responded yes with good faith, he gave her his blessing."⁷⁴ Although most of the details came from other nuns who had witnessed the cure and the doctor who provided the threads did not testify, the promoters did manage to find a surgeon who had assisted in the treatment, who confirmed the entire story.⁷⁵

Testimonies about other miracles followed similar patterns—eyewitnesses to the cures testified that the beneficiaries of these miracles had untreatable ailments that were cured unnaturally quickly when Barbarigo was invoked. Typical eyewitnesses included family members, the cured themselves, priests, nuns, neighbors, and doctors, who were asked to verify that the cure could not have been natural. These miracle stories were crucial to Barbarigo's case. Though his process might have been lackluster in some respects, his ability to perform miracles during and after life made him a strong candidate for beatification.

The testimonies for the apostolic process were all collected by 1728 and subsequently examined by the Congregation of Rites. New *animadversiones* were produced in 1734; this time, the promoter of the faith took issue with the way interviews had been conducted, as some witnesses were not asked

⁷²ASV, *Congregazione dei Riti, Processus*, b. 3476, fol. 931r.

⁷³Ibid., fols. 902v–903r: "La mattina susseguente la ritrovassimo sana, allegra, e con buon colorito."

⁷⁴Ibid., fol. 903r: "Raccontava che la notte stessa gli era comparso in visione il Venerabile Signor Cardinale Barbarigo, in compagnia della Beatissima Vergine . . . e gli disse se aveva desiderio della sua salute, e rispondendogli di sì con buona fede, gli diede la sua benedizione."

⁷⁵Ibid., fol. 1124v.

all of the questions.⁷⁶ The promoters responded that some witnesses stated outright that they had no knowledge of miracles or supernatural gifts and thus had not been asked about these issues.⁷⁷ The process then stalled for nearly a decade, partly because of the death of the cardinal in charge of the Congregation.⁷⁸ The revival of the case seems to be due to the support of Cardinal-Bishop Carlo della Torre di Rezzonico, who entered the diocese of Padua in 1743.⁷⁹ The Rezzonico family was one of the prominent patrician families of Venice, and Carlo's mother was Vittoria Barbarigo, a relation of the Servant of God.⁸⁰ Rezzonico's interest prompted a closer look at Barbarigo's writings and at the testimonies of the apostolic process, which led to another set of *animadversiones* in 1746, seeking more of Barbarigo's writings.⁸¹ In 1746 the promoters sent twenty-eight manuscript volumes of the bishop's correspondence, which the Congregation approved in 1748.⁸² Again, the case stalled for almost a decade, this time partly because of the ill health of the new cardinal in charge of the Congregation.⁸³ In 1755, Pope Benedict XIV (Prospero Lambertini, the previous promoter of the faith) called for a new set of *animadversiones*, which returned to the question of residency.⁸⁴ The new promoter of the faith found a letter in Barbarigo's correspondence discussing the nature of episcopal residency.⁸⁵ The issue of whether episcopal residency was *de iure divino*, mandated by God, or only by the pope, had been debated but not settled at the Council of Trent.⁸⁶

⁷⁶“Animadversiones,” in *Sacra Rituum Congregatione Eminentissimo et Reverendissimo Domino Cardinali Zondadario Veneta, seu Patavina Beatificationis, & Canonizationis ven. Servi Dei Gregorii cardinalis Barbadii Episcopi olim Bergomensis, & deinde Patavini. Positio super dubio An constet de validitate Processuum tam Ordinaria, quam Apostolica Auctoritate constructorum, Testes sin rite et recte examinati, et lura legitime compulsata* (henceforth *Positio 1734*) (Rome: Typis Reverendae Camerae Apostolicae, 1734), 2.

⁷⁷“Responsio ad animadversiones,” in *Positio 1734*, 2. In the end, seven testimonies from Bergamo were excluded but the rest were accepted. Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 508.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 509.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 510.

⁸⁰Gino Benzoni, *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 59, n.d., www.treccani.it/enciclopedia.

⁸¹“Animadversiones,” in *Positio 1746*, 23.

⁸²Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 516.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 545.

⁸⁴“Animadversiones,” in *Sacra Rituum Congregatione Eminentissimo et Reverendissimo Cardinali Galli Veneta, seu Patavina Beatificationis, & Canonizationis ven. Servi Dei Gregorii cardinalis Barbadii Episcopi olim Bergomensis, & deinde Patavini, Positio additionalis super dubio An constet de virtutibus theologalibus fide, spe, & charitate in Deum & proximum, necnon cardinalibus prudentia, iustitia, fortitudine, & temperantia, earumque annexis in gradu heroico* (henceforth *Positio 1756*) (Rome: Typis Reverendae Camerae Apostolicae, 1756), 2–7.

⁸⁵“Animadversiones,” in *Positio 1756*, 4.

⁸⁶In the Twenty-Third Session, Chapter I, the decrees mandate that justifiable absences from one's territory must be approved by the pope (or a metropolitan or suffragan bishop, if necessary), suggesting that residency requirements were by papal mandate, but this is not clearly stated. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees*, 167.

Barbarigo argued in his letter that it was *de iure divino*; the promoter of the faith thus objected that Barbarigo's theological position rendered his papal pardons invalid. The promoters of Barbarigo's case were unable to dispute this, so they relied on the argument that Barbarigo's trips were necessary and justified because they were undertaken to defend episcopal rights.⁸⁷

Another set of *animadversiones* soon followed,⁸⁸ which raised the issue of Barbarigo's proliferation of ecclesiastical benefices and pensions, technically in violation of the Tridentine ban on multiple benefices.⁸⁹ Barbarigo's promoters admitted that he had been the titular holder of multiple benefices, but noted that he had passed the fruits on to the seminary and other clergy in the diocese.⁹⁰ Considering the bishop's incredibly frugal lifestyle and the fact that he frequently used his own private funds to pay for projects in his diocese, this claim seems plausible.

The final issue raised by the promoter of the faith suggests that there was a shift in Church politics by the mid-eighteenth century. In contrast to the witness testimonies extolling Barbarigo's incredible mercy (which are supported by the records of his episcopal inquisitions), the promoter of the faith suggested that Barbarigo had been too severe in his correction methods.⁹¹ This concern for Barbarigo's disciplinary strategies reflects the somewhat disjointed Catholic Enlightenment, which combined Tridentine Reform, French Jansenism, and Enlightenment philosophy in its attempt to continue the reform of the Church.⁹² The addition of Jansenism's focus on a calmer spirituality, contrary to the "dominant and aggressive cultural and intellectual movement of [baroque Catholicism]," and Enlightenment ideals of tolerance, liberality, and freedom to the reforms of Trent necessitated a modified approach.⁹³ Enlightenment Catholicism had its roots in Tridentine Reform but moved

⁸⁷"Responsio ad animadversione adicionales," in *Positio 1756*, 2–12.

⁸⁸"Novae Animadversiones," in *Sacra Rituum Congregatione Eminentissimo et Reverendissimo Domino Cardinali Galli Veneta, seu Patavina Beatificationis, & Canonizationis ven. Servi Dei Gregorii cardinalis Barbadii Episcopi olim Bergomensis, & deinde Patavini, Positio super dubio An constet de virtutibus theologalibus fide, spe, & charitate in Deum & proximum, necnon cardinalibus prudentia, iustitia, fortitudine & temperantia, earumque annexis in gradu heroico* (henceforth *Positio 1758*) (Rome: Typis Reverendae Camerae Apostolicae, 1758), 10.

⁸⁹Twenty-Fourth Session, Reform, Chapter XVII. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees*, 209.

⁹⁰*Sacra Rituum Congregatione Eminentissimo et Reverendissimo Domino Cardinali Galli Veneta, seu Patavina Beatificationis, & Canonizationis ven. Servi Dei Gregorii cardinalis Barbadii Episcopi olim Bergomensis, & deinde Patavini, Responsio ad postrema animadversiones super dubio An constet de virtutibus theologalibus fide, spe, & charitate in Deum & proximum, necnon cardinalibus prudentia, iustitia, fortitudine & temperantia, earumque annexis in gradu heroico* (Rome: Typis Reverendae Camerae Apostolicae, 1758), 4–5.

⁹¹"Novae animadversiones," in *Positio 1758*, 6–9.

⁹²Ulrich Lehner, "The Many Faces of the Catholic Enlightenment," in *Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe*, ed. Ulrich Lehner and Michael Printy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 11.

⁹³Derek Beales, "Religion and Culture," in *The Eighteenth Century: Europe 1688–1815*, ed. Timothy Blanning (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 156.

away from certain aspects of baroque Catholicism, including the primacy of the Jesuits, strong devotion to saints, and the strength of papal prerogatives.⁹⁴ This new generation of Catholic reformers called for a “return to the clarity and simplicity of an idealized primitive church . . . in the Enlightenment sense, [a return] to origins.”⁹⁵ Barbarigo’s methods were a far cry from the more repressive “Counter Reformation” program exemplified by the model of Carlo Borromeo, and Barbarigo’s fraternal and pastoral focus would appear an ideal match for Enlightenment Catholicism. Yet it seems that some considered Barbarigo insufficiently mild for the model Enlightenment bishop he would become if beatified.

However, if his image could be molded appropriately, his beatification could help the Church with the challenges it faced at this time. The late 1750s and 1760s were a key period for Italian Enlightenment thought and saw rising tensions between the Catholic Church and Italian states, the expulsion of the Jesuits, changes in Italian schooling, and increasingly challenging debates about papal power and more repressive elements of reform like the Inquisition and censorship.⁹⁶ The Church responded to these challenges—particularly political and lay opposition—with attempts at reform and defense of the papacy.⁹⁷ Barbarigo’s beatification could help both causes. Presenting Barbarigo as a merciful, pastoral reformer helped to support a new image of Enlightenment reform and provide a model for bishops who would be called upon to implement it. At the same time, beatifying Barbarigo could also rouse support for the papacy in Venice, a city that was central in many of the era’s big debates on ecclesiastical power.⁹⁸ More broadly, Barbarigo’s resistance of Venetian control over his diocese could be marshalled in opposition to the growing secular control over “national” churches at the expense of papal power.⁹⁹ Similarly, Barbarigo’s noted collaboration with the Jesuits, particularly with the creation of his famous (and still active) seminary, could be used to counteract criticisms of the order that were growing at that time. Finally, Barbarigo’s beatification could be considered a declaration of the Church triumphant, closing the chapter of Tridentine Reform with a statement of “mission accomplished.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴Mario Rosa, “The Catholic Aufklärung in Italy,” in *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe*, ed. Ulrich Lehner and Michael Printy, vol. 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 217.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 217.

⁹⁶Franco Venturi, “Church and Reform in Enlightenment Italy: The Sixties of the Eighteenth Century,” *The Journal of Modern History* 48, no. 2 (June 1976): 215.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 221.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 228.

⁹⁹Nigel Aston, “Continental Catholic Europe,” in *Enlightenment, Reawakening and Revolution 1660–1815*, ed. Stewart Brown and Timothy Tackett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 223.

¹⁰⁰Aston considers Tridentine Reform largely accomplished and over by the mid-eighteenth century and sees the Church’s problem as having failed to create a new agenda to replace it. *Ibid.*, 31.

These factors, combined with the pope's personal interests, likely influenced Barbarigo's eventual beatification by Pope Clement XIII on July 16, 1761. Before ascending to the papal throne, Clement XIII was Bishop Carlo della Torre di Rezzonico of Padua, who had revived the case in the 1740s. He declared Barbarigo a new Borromeo, an updated model bishop for Enlightenment Catholicism. Clement wrote that Barbarigo was a model bishop who could provide an example "particularly to the pastors of the Church" whom he could "rouse to battle, so they might be crowned with glory" in an epoch of "constant difficult tribulations with which the Catholic Church is vexed and harassed."¹⁰¹ In this particular moment, Clement found the model of the heroic, tireless, but merciful bishop useful as an exemplar to other ecclesiastics and thus pushed the case through and highlighted these aspects of his holiness, declaring him a model to bishops, rather than all Catholics. Barbarigo's canonization process would follow a similar, but even more troubled, path.

III. FROM BEATIFICATION TO CANONIZATION, 1761–1960

For nearly one hundred fifty years, Barbarigo's case went nowhere and his cult remained local, at least in part due to political turmoil in the region, as the Venetian Republic fell to Napoleon's army only a few decades after Barbarigo's beatification.¹⁰² But by the end of the nineteenth century, the political situation in the new Kingdom of Italy had stabilized enough for the Paduan Church to attempt a revival of devotion to Barbarigo, just in time for the bicentennial of his death in 1897 (perhaps also a convenient distraction from the centennial of the fall of Venice). Giuseppe Callegari, then bishop of Padua, commissioned a new hagiography and promoted his blessed predecessor as a symbol of a rich tradition of Venetian bishops devoted to religious and pastoral activity.¹⁰³ His message resonated with nostalgia and pride felt by residents of the Veneto: for them, Barbarigo was a symbol of their former grandeur and of a particularly Venetian strand of Catholicism, marked by a skepticism of mysticism and a preference for an omnipresent, powerful, but ultimately locally controlled Church.¹⁰⁴ Barbarigo's

¹⁰¹Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 559.

¹⁰²Napoleon combined Venice, Lombardy, and parts of central Italy into a kingdom, establishing himself as King of Italy and leaving a viceroy to rule the territory in 1805. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Lombardy-Venetia was turned over to the Austrians, under whose control it remained until 1866, with the exception of a few months of freedom after the 1848 rebellions. Denis Mack Smith, *The Making of Italy, 1796–1870* (New York: Walker and Company, 1968), 16, 66, 152–60, 392.

¹⁰³Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 567–69.

¹⁰⁴This idea was eloquently developed by Antonio Negri, an eminent Italian philosopher and socialist from Padua, in a letter from prison written while awaiting trial for supposed

intellectual roots, defense of episcopal jurisdiction, and reform efforts intended to strengthen the parish represented the ideals of the Venetian Church.

To excite the people, Callegari commissioned a new hagiography from Giuseppe Alessi, the theological canon of the Paduan Cathedral. The text begins by explaining that Barbarigo's "contemporaries called him the Angel of Peace, Father of the Poor, [and] the second Borromeo and that history salutes him as one of the greatest bishop reformers the Church can boast of having."¹⁰⁵ The text focuses on Barbarigo's humility and devotion to reform, before turning to a detailed list of his miracles. In between the pre- and post mortem miracles, Alessi handled the difficult issue of Barbarigo's deathbed terror, adopting a different tactic than the promoters of Barbarigo's case had a century and a half earlier. Alessi chose a bolder comparison than Saint Hilarion: he connected Barbarigo's terror to Christ's cry on the cross of "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew, 27:46).¹⁰⁶ He then concluded by asserting that Barbarigo's fear was further evidence of his humility, and that the reader should be warned by this, as "the most holy bishop feared, feared the tribunal of the eternal Judge, he feared, he whose most pure life was spent in the exercise of the most heroic virtue," implying that the average reader would have much greater reason to fear.¹⁰⁷ This new interpretation of Barbarigo also fit with the late-nineteenth-century Church's attempt to reconcile Catholicism with contemporary society. Pope Leo XIII (r. 1878–1903), arguing that the Church was not opposed to progress, reminded the world of the deep and lasting influences that Christ's sacrifice had on the development of western culture.¹⁰⁸ By connecting Barbarigo's death with Christ's, Alessi tapped into a particularly potent image that helped create a longer trajectory of holy sacrifice and also demonstrated Barbarigo's sanctity. Having built an image of a modern ideal bishop, Alessi ended his hagiography with a call for Barbarigo to be canonized.¹⁰⁹

The one hundred fiftieth anniversary of Barbarigo's beatification in 1911 provided another chance for revitalizing the cult. Bishop Luigi Pelizzo of Padua planned an elaborate jubilee, which included special days of worship, novenas, a procession of Barbarigo's body, a congress on catechism, and

involvement in the Italian terrorist group the Red Brigades in the late 1970s. Antonio Negri, "Veneto secco," in *Pipe-line: lettere da Rebibbia* (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2009), 10–11.

¹⁰⁵ Alessi, *Vita del B. Gregorio Barbarigo, Cardinale di SRCE Vescovo di Padova*, viii.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 238–239.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 239.

¹⁰⁸ Robert Kraynak, "Pope Leo XIII and the Catholic Response to Modernity," *Modern Age* 49, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 531.

¹⁰⁹ Alessi, *Vita del B. Gregorio Barbarigo, Cardinale di SRCE Vescovo di Padova*, 283.

special events for the clergy.¹¹⁰ These celebrations were meant to highlight Barbarigo's greatest achievements as bishop, as was Pelizzo's pastoral letter for Lent in 1911 which stated that Barbarigo's "life continues to pulse through the Seminary that conserves a precious relic, his heart. We will erect a marble and not unworthy monument in *his* Seminary."¹¹¹ Finally, to remind Paduans of Barbarigo's devotion to pastoral visitations, Pelizzo used the *beato's* history to announce a new round of visitations which he would undertake, calling Barbarigo an "unrivaled model also in this most important part of pastoral ministry."¹¹² By emulating his holy predecessor, Pelizzo made it clear that Barbarigo was still a pertinent model.

Beyond reminding the diocese of Barbarigo's achievements as a model bishop, Pelizzo also sent a request for news of miracles, needed for the canonization process to continue. He encouraged Paduans to appeal to Barbarigo for intercession, reminding them that "more than once during his life and many times after his death, our **Beato** has worked miracles."¹¹³ Should any miracles occur (or should they know of previous miracles), Paduans were requested to "immediately send a detailed written narration to this Curia, corroborated by witnesses and necessary proofs."¹¹⁴ A year later, the process was officially reopened. The case found a sympathetic ear in Rome under Pius X; Pius (Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto, 1835–1914) came from the Veneto, studied at the seminary of Padua, and had served as patriarch of Venice before becoming pope.¹¹⁵ For Pius, who demonstrated dedication to pastoral care and education both before and after his elevation to the papal throne, Barbarigo's devotion to the seminary, catechism, and pastoral reform were very appealing.¹¹⁶ Unfortunately for the promoters of Barbarigo's process, they were unable to find another miracle, and Pius X

¹¹⁰Luigi Pelizzo, *Pastorale per la Quaresima del 1911, Feste del B. Gregorio Barbarigo*, 1911, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (henceforth BAV), *Miscellanea* R.G.Teol.II.429, int. 2, 9–15; and Luigi Pelizzo, *Lettera pastorale dottrina Cristiana - Licenza dalla scuola - Notificazioni varie*, 1912. BAV, R.G.Teol.II.429, int. 17, 28.

¹¹¹Pelizzo, *Pastorale per la Quaresima*, 4: "La cui vita vibrò continua per il Seminario che, preziosa reliquia, Ne conserva il cuore, inalzeremo un marmoreo e non indegno monumento nel Suo Seminario."

¹¹²Luigi Pelizzo, *Lettera pastorale apertura della sacra visita pastorale. Istruzioni-Notificazioni al Clero*, 1912. BAV, R.G.Teol.II.429 int. 16, 11: "Modello impareggiabile anche in questa parte importantissima del Pastorale Ministero."

¹¹³Luigi Pelizzo, *Lettera pastorale riassunzione della causa del B. Gregorio*. Azione Cattolica-Emigranti, 1911. BAV, R.G.Teol.II.429 int. 3, 5: "Non una sola volta il nostro **Beato** mentre era ancora in vita, molte volte dopo la sua morte, ha operato produci."

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 5: "Mandarne subito dettagliata narrazione in iscritto a questa Curia, corroborata dalle testimonianze e prove necessarie."

¹¹⁵Umberto Benigni, "Pope Pius X," *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton, 1911), www.newadvent.org.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.* See also Pope Pius X, "Encyclical of Pope Pius X. On the Teaching of Christian Doctrine," *The Furrow* 3, no. 8 (August 1952): 421–431.

died in 1914. He was succeeded by Pope Benedict XV (r. 1914–1922), who found himself in the unfortunate position of rising to the papacy at the start of World War I and had no connections to the Veneto or Barbarigo; this process would certainly not be a priority.

Although the situation in Rome was not promising, the Paduan supporters continued to solicit evidence of miracles, but only one came to light.¹¹⁷ It occurred in the seminary in 1898, and eight priests and a doctor testified in 1923. The lack of miracles from laypeople and the nature of the one that was reported suggest that Barbarigo's cult was primarily appealing to the clergy and was particularly strong in his seminary. The miracle itself was fairly typical: a seminarian with a delicate constitution fell ill after being caught in a storm, developed a serious fever, and began coughing up blood, at which point the doctors considered him lost. His classmates and professors began a novena (a nine-day cycle of prayers seeking special graces) to Barbarigo, and the seminarian consumed a few threads of Barbarigo's clothing each morning, "taking them like my communion."¹¹⁸ On the ninth day, as the vigil ended, the young man asked to take communion the following day. In the morning, he was completely healed, and the doctor declared it miraculous and testified that "I was left amazed, because I could not find in him any residual illness."¹¹⁹ This miracle was perfect—plenty of witnesses, no doubts—but insufficient, as two were required for this phase. Barbarigo's case would not get a second one.

When this miracle was reported to Rome, Pius XI (r. 1922–1939) occupied the papal throne. Like Benedict XV, he had no connections to the Veneto or Barbarigo; he came from a town near Milan and had served previously in the Milanese archdiocese. Pius XI was a prolific saint-maker; he beatified four hundred ninety-nine people and canonized thirty-four, but Barbarigo's case was incomplete and did not fit his priorities. The vast majority of the *beati* and saints he created were martyrs, primarily missionaries, victims of religious persecution in early modern England, and victims of the French Revolution, Spanish Civil War, and conflicts in Mexico.¹²⁰ Valentina Ciciliot argues that these martyrs proved useful in Pius XI's attempt to respond to the political challenges facing the Church and Europe at this point,

¹¹⁷The *Processus* fond of the Congregation of Rites only contains one volume from this portion of the process, the Paduan apostolic process of 1923–1925. No access to documents produced after 1939 is permitted by the Vatican Secret Archives, so the bulk of the canonization proceedings is inaccessible.

¹¹⁸ASV, *Congregazione dei Riti, Processus*, b. 5404, 34: "Prendeva questi come mia comunione."

¹¹⁹Ibid., 146–7: "Io rimasi meravigliato, perché non riscontrei in lui che qualche residuo del male."

¹²⁰Ciciliot, "La strategia canonizzatrice di Pio XI," 420–421, 433; and Chaline, "La spiritualité de Pie XI," 162–163.

particularly the rise of fascism and Nazism.¹²¹ He had a secondary goal of adding female saints who would provide an orthodox model of female religiosity to counteract growing laic and feminist models of female virtue.¹²² As neither martyr nor nun, Barbarigo was not a particularly good fit for the Catholic Church's needs in the late 1920s and 1930s. Nor was he a priority of Pope Pius XII (r. 1939–1958), who led the Church during World War II. As with his predecessors, he lacked connections to the Veneto, and given that Barbarigo's case remained incomplete, he had no particular reason to examine it.

Throughout the long process of beatification and canonization, Barbarigo's case needed the assistance of popes with ties to the Veneto, but at no point more than the end. Barbarigo's case was revived by John XXIII, who became pope in 1958. Before ascending to the papal throne, Angelo Roncalli was raised in Barbarigo's first diocese of Bergamo and later became Patriarch of Venice. He developed a strong tie to the Tridentine period and to two Italian model bishops: Carlo Borromeo and Gregorio Barbarigo.¹²³ John XXIII found himself able to help one of his models by pushing for his canonization, even ignoring the petition for beatification of his predecessor Pius XII to focus on Barbarigo.¹²⁴

Barbarigo was one of ten saints canonized by John XXIII, and his case stands out from the others for several reasons, but most importantly because it was incomplete.¹²⁵ In 1959, the bishop of Padua wrote to the pope requesting that he overlook the lack of a second miracle in light of Barbarigo's "reputation for superior virtue" and the "great works sustained by him."¹²⁶ With this suggestion, John XXIII opted for the process of equipollent canonization. Although the connection was not made explicit, it seems no coincidence that Barbarigo's canonization was timed to coincide with the

¹²¹Ciciliot, "La strategia canonizzatrice di Pio XI," 441–442.

¹²²*Ibid.*, 442.

¹²³Peter Hebblethwaite, *John XXIII* (London: Chapman, 1984); Jared Wicks, "Tridentine Motivations of Pope John XXIII before and during Vatican II," *Theological Studies* 75, no. 4 (2014): 847–62. When Roncalli first became bishop, he had his ordination in a church dedicated to Borromeo and invoked Barbarigo as one of his protectors. Hebblethwaite, *John XXIII*, 115; and Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 581. See also Alberto Melloni, "History, Pastorate, and Theology: The Impact of Carlo Borromeo on A.G. Roncalli/Pope John XXIII," in *San Carlo Borromeo: Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. John Headley and John Tomaro (Washington, D.C.: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1988), 277–299.

¹²⁴Hebblethwaite, *John XXIII*, 378.

¹²⁵John XXIII approved the canonization of nine saints; the tenth was one approved by his predecessor but for whom John XXIII performed the ceremony. Eight were members of religious orders or founders of religious societies; two were beatified in the nineteenth century, six in the twentieth. The only one similar to Borromeo was Juan de Ribera, Archbishop of Valencia, who was beatified in 1796 and canonised a few weeks after Barbarigo in 1960.

¹²⁶Giovannucci, *Il processo di canonizzazione*, 577.

announcement and planning of the Second Vatican Council. In the homily during the canonization celebration in 1960, John XXIII called the bishop-saint “a *modern* model prelate in the most correct and ample sense of the term,” and noted that he was a perfect example of how to live as a priest and bishop. Though he was “half a century from S. Carlo Borromeo, he was an admirable imitator of the application of post-Tridentine legislation to the governance of the diocese.”¹²⁷ John XXIII again tied Barbarigo to the “modern,” saying that “under the precious veil of his modernity he cultivated firstly a most exquisite spirit of authentic sanctity, an incredible purity that allowed him to preserve his baptismal innocence, and to grow year by year in the exercise of the highest and most edifying priestly virtues.”¹²⁸ To pilgrims in Rome who had come from the Veneto, he said “We propose San Carlo Borromeo and San Gregorio Barbarigo for the edification and joy of the bishops and priests of all the world.”¹²⁹ Barbarigo particularly should be emulated for his care of the poor, catechism of the people, seminary and training of clergy, and his work to maintain good Catholic culture.

As Pope John XXIII declared the Council of Trent still relevant when he announced the Second Vatican Council, he constructed a genealogy of reform that cemented Barbarigo’s utility for the modern clergy.¹³⁰ Two weeks later, John XXIII canonized Juan de Ribera and added him to this genealogy, tying Ribera to Borromeo and Barbarigo and praising him as a “model bishop in his pastoral activity.”¹³¹ He noted that Ribera’s quick and faithful adoption of the Tridentine decrees should be noted as the Church prepared to begin the Second Vatican Council. John XXIII saw these three Tridentine bishops as ideal exemplars for all bishops and priests on the eve of his great reforming Council. Barbarigo, even more than Ribera, did not appeal to the pope as a model of personal virtues and quiet holiness, but as a model of episcopal excellence.¹³²

Once he was canonized, the Paduans also adopted this image of Barbarigo as a model reformer for their own times. The bishop of Padua in 1960, Girolamo Bartolomeo Bortignon, praised Barbarigo’s holy life “in the occupation of an

¹²⁷ *Atti della canonizzazione di S. Gregorio Barbarigo*, 466. Emphasis mine. All of John XXIII’s speeches are also available online at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/it.html>.

¹²⁸ *Atti della canonizzazione di S. Gregorio Barbarigo*, 466–467.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 472. The example that laypeople might take from Barbarigo is never stated, though his more general virtues are discussed, particularly in the homily.

¹³⁰ Angelo (Pope John XXIII) J. X. Roncalli, “Allocutio Ioannes PP. XXIII in Sollemni SS. Concilii Inauguratione,” *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54, no. 14 (1962): 792.

¹³¹ Roncalli, “Discurso de su santidad Juan XXIII a los peregrinos españoles con motivo de la canonización del Beato Juan de Ribera.”

¹³² Interestingly, in his homily for Ribera’s canonization, John XXIII did not declare the new saint as an episcopal model, but noted his utility for all Christians and focused more on his devotion than his exemplarity as a bishop. Roncalli, “Canonización del Beato Juan de Ribera. Homilía de su santidad Juan XXIII.”

intense apostolic activity.” He noted that “the harmony in his life between his industriousness . . . and his union with God . . . is admirable,” crediting Barbarigo with, “in a modern phrase . . . realiz[ing] the spirituality of the diocesan clergy.”¹³³ At the same time, a local priest, Giuseppe Rocco, wrote a new hagiography based on a selective reading of Barbarigo’s visitation records, which highlighted Barbarigo’s successes and ignored his struggles, including the issues of recidivist priests and the deathbed terror.¹³⁴ The perfect image of Gregorio Barbarigo, model pastoral leader, was complete. Nor is this a relic of the 1960s—as recently as 2009, a new hagiographic text was published by the former archivist of the Archivio della Curia Vescovile di Padova. This text offers essentially the same outlines as Giuseppe Alessi’s 1897 text, including the comparison of Barbarigo’s deathbed crisis to the cries of Christ on the cross.¹³⁵

Over the three centuries since the death of Gregorio Barbarigo, his story, like those of all saints, was consciously shaped and revised to fit the needs of the Church and its spiritual leaders. In life, he was a devoted reformer who worked tirelessly but not always effectively, and in the end doubted his own impact. In the early eighteenth century, he was a second Borromeo softened by the influence of de Sales, the triumphant leader of a post-Tridentine idyll. By the mid-eighteenth century, he had to be reshaped to emphasize the Salesian over the Borromeo, to soften the already merciful disciplinary methods for which he had been lauded. Largely forgotten by all but the Paduan clergy in the nineteenth century (perhaps in part due to his promotion as a model for them, rather than for the laity), by the mid-twentieth century he became the “modern” model bishop, helping to bridge the gap between Trent and Vatican II and setting the tone for the kind of reforming council John XXIII wanted to lead. Despite serious challenges to his process at many points, ultimately it was expedient for the Church to overlook potential issues or doubts to construct the model bishop needed in the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. The Church needed model reforming bishops like Barbarigo and other Tridentine “heroes” to help clergy understand their role and strategize reforms. Beatification and canonization were the best ways to spread their image and encourage clergy, especially bishops, to emulate them. By highlighting these saints as model reformers rather than emphasizing their equally impressive personal devotion and exemplary lives as followers of Christ, the Church made it clear that these were models for the clergy, particularly for reforming bishops, whether in

¹³³ *Atti della canonizzazione di S. Gregorio Barbarigo*, 439–40.

¹³⁴ Giuseppe Rocco, *I luoghi di San Gregorio: strade e paesi nel itinerario pastorale del vescovo Barbarigo* (Padua: Antoniana, 1961).

¹³⁵ Claudio Bellinati, *Gregorio Barbarigo: un vescovo eroico* (Padua: Messaggero di Sant’Antonio, 2009), 175–5.

the wake of Trent, the Catholic Enlightenment, or the Second Vatican Council. Each new telling of the saint's life modernized his story to make it applicable to contemporary bishops. These subtle shifts in hagiography made through the process of saint-making allow us to understand the changing needs of the Church over time. By recognizing how the *vitae* of all *beati* and saints are molded throughout their processes, we can also see how promoters of causes, the Congregation of Rites, and individual popes have tried to respond to contemporaneous challenges by providing the community of the faithful with suitable exemplars of holiness.