

Vatican Investigates 'Miracle' Recovery of Man Shot in Head



Jory Aebly Given Rosary Blessed by Pope John Paul, Recovery Could Help With Sainthood
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When Jory Aebly was shot in the head, execution-style during a mugging five weeks ago in Cleveland, Ohio, that should have been the end of it. Doctors at the Metro Health Medical Center told his family it was a "non-survivable" injury, according to [the hospital's Web site](#).

But Tuesday, a very-much-alive Aebly was wheeled to a press conference before he went home in what some believe is a true "miracle," possibly good enough to help [earn deceased Pope John Paul II sainthood](#).

"It's one in a million," Dr. Robert Geertman, a neurosurgeon involved in Aebly's treatment, said in a press conference just days after the shooting. "My jaw was on the floor after a day or two of seeing he is hanging on. ... I'd say it's pretty miraculous."

The connection between the 26-year-old's incredible recovery and the late pope came in the form of hospital chaplain, Father Art Snedeker, and a single blessed rosary Snedeker gave Aebly soon after the shooting.

"[Pope John Paul II] promised me that he would always pray for the patients at Metro and he blessed a dozen rosaries with special patients here," Snedeker said in the press conference. "The first night that Jory arrived and I performed the sacrament of the sick, I also asked Pope John Paul to pray for Jory and to protect him."

Snedeker gave Aebly the last of the rosaries that were blessed by the pope.

From then on, Aebly repeatedly amazed doctors with [consistent improvement](#) culminating in his release Tuesday, just two days before the fourth anniversary of John Paul's death.

"I stand before you today and can say, to my mind, Jory is a miracle," Snedeker said at the press conference.

'Miracle' Could Help Earn John Paul II Sainthood

At the press conference, Aebly's family also showed no shortage of faith concerning Aebly's recovery.

"I believe in the power of prayer and I firmly believe that your prayers are the reason why I can introduce you to my brave and determined son," Aebly's mother, Deb Wolfram said.

Aebly credited his recovery to "the many prayers from family, friends and co-workers and even people [he] hasn't met."

The Vatican is especially interested in the prayers from one of the people Aebly never met, but one Snedeker is certain prayed for him: Pope John Paul II.

In order to become a saint, candidates needs two official miracles attributed to them. The Vatican is currently investigating hundreds of cases of reported miracles associated with John Paul, but they haven't certified one yet.

"The first stage is beatification where the person is proclaimed blessed on the basis of living a life of heroic virtue and also performing one miracle," professor Mathew Schmalz of College of the Holy Cross said. "The second and final stage is when the person becomes a saint and thus is canonized. That happens when a second miracle is documented."

Shortly after he died four years ago today, Pope John Paul II was put on the fast track for sainthood when Pope Benedict personally waived the five-year waiting period usually required for consideration.

Still, a Vatican official said the process could take some time and there is no precise schedule. The Vatican has repeatedly denied rumors that Pope John Paul will be declared a saint in June of this year, which would coincide with the 30th anniversary of his election as pope.

"We cannot predict a precise schedule," Monsignor Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for the Cause of Saints told Italian news service ANSA. "All stages, including the examination of the miracle, have to be conducted in a particularly thorough way."

If Aebly's recovery is validated as a miracle, it would be enough for Pope John Paul's beatification, leaving just one more before sainthood would be possible.

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