



## Saint Carlo Acutis

Canonized by Pope Leo XIV – September 7, 2025

Carlo Acutis was born in London of Italian parents on May 3, 1991. Because of work reasons, the Acutis family moved shortly afterward to Italy, settling in Milan. Carlo attended grade school and middle school in Milan. He had an interest in religion from a young age, when, at four years old, his late grandmother appeared to him in a dream to request prayer. He got special permission to receive his First Holy Communion earlier than is traditional and became a regular attendee of daily Mass. He even convinced his mother, who was not particularly religious, to attend Mass with him. In 2005, Carlo began studies at a Jesuit high school in Milan. In his high school, he advocated for his bullied peers and offered support for his friends whose parents were divorcing. As a student, Carlo showed himself skilled in all things to do with information technology, computers, and the internet. He was inspired by Steve Jobs, former CEO of Apple! Carlo was a computer programmer who created virtual exhibitions and databases on the Eucharistic miracles when the bread and wine are believed to change into the physical body and blood of Jesus and reported on sightings of the Blessed Mother. This was his passion project!

On October 1, 2006, Carlo developed an inflammation of the throat. He was diagnosed with parotitis and dehydration. A few days later, Carlo's pain worsened. By Sunday, October 8, he was too weak to get out of bed to go to Mass. He was taken to a clinic that specialized in blood diseases and doctors found that he had acute leukemia. He was given little chance of recovery. The hospital staff called in their chaplain and Carlo received the Sacrament of the Sick. Fully conscious of what was happening to him, Carlo offered his suffering both for Pope Benedict XVI and for the Church. The doctors treating his final illness asked him if he was in great pain, to which he replied, ***“There are people who suffer much more than me”***. His final words to his mother were: ***“Mom, don't be afraid. Since Jesus became a man, death has become the passage towards life, and we don't need to flee it. Let us prepare ourselves to experience something extraordinary in the eternal life.”*** Carlo fell into a coma and after a cerebral hemorrhage, died on October 12, 2006. His parents brought his body home, where people came for four days to pay

their last respects. A crowd of strangers attended his funeral, including young people who had abandoned the Church.

In his youth, Carlo was attracted to Francis of Assisi's life, teachings and prayers. On his deathbed, he asked to be buried in Assisi — the birthplace of St. Francis, the patron saint of Italy. He was first buried in a cemetery in Assisi, but once his canonization process opened in 2019, his body was exhumed and dressed in jeans, a warm-up jacket and sneakers. His mortal remains have now been placed in a see-through casket in the small church of the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore and the Shrine of the Spoliation (Renunciation) in the hill-top town of Assisi. This Church is now visited by thousands of people from around the world each day. After his death, a miracle was attributed to him — and it happened to his own mother! Through Carlo's intercession, she gave birth to twins at age forty-four, exactly four years after his death.

A saint's unique characteristic is their ability to always speak to all people of all ages and times. Carlo's upcoming canonization reflects the Vatican's interest in making a more modern church that appeals to a new generation of faithful. The core of Carlo Acutis' message is not juvenile: it is his radical love for the Eucharist, which he called the "highway to heaven." His practice of attending daily Mass as a transformative encounter with Christ, his ability to blend contemplation with action, prayer with engagement in the digital world — all this speaks to every baptized person, regardless of age or era. Carlo was named a Servant of God in 2013, and then Pope Francis declared him Venerable in 2018.

In 2020, Pope Francis confirmed a second miracle, concerning the healing of a young boy with a pancreatic illness after the boy's mother sought Carlo's intercession through a novena. This led to Carlo's beatification, which occurred in October of 2020 in Assisi, Italy, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Carlo was canonized by Leo XIV on Sunday morning, September 7, 2025 at the Vatican. Thousands of young people from around the world attended this celebration at the Vatican.

### ***Official Prayer to St. Carlo Acutis***

***O God, Our Father, we thank you for giving us Carlo Acutis, whose life is example for young people and a message of love for everyone. During his 15 years on earth, you made him fall in love with Your Son Jesus, making the Eucharist his "highway to heaven". You gave him Mary as a beloved Mother, and with the Rosary, you made him a singer of her tenderness. Receive his prayer for us. Above all, look upon the poor whom he loved and helped. Through the merits of this Angel of Youth, grant me the grace which I earnestly seek (ask the grace which you seek). I ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.***



## Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati

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What was so unique about Blessed **Pier Giorgio Frassati**? Born in 1901, at the turn of the last century in Turin, Italy, Pier Giorgio's mother, Adelaide Ametis, was a painter. His father Alfredo, an agnostic, was the founder and director of the liberal newspaper, *La Stampa*, and was influential in Italian politics, holding positions as an Italian Senator and Ambassador to Germany. Pier Giorgio came from a family of means and was educated at home with his sister Luciana, one year younger than him, before attending with her a public school and finally a school run by the Jesuits. At the age of 17, in 1918, he joined the St. Vincent de Paul Society and dedicated much of his spare time to serving the sick and the needy, caring for orphans, and assisting the demobilized servicemen returning from World War I.

Pier Giorgio loved helping the poor, even using his bus fare for charity. This spirit of selflessness was nurtured by daily communion with Christ in the Eucharist, by meditation on St. Paul's "Hymn on Charity". He became a lay member of the Dominican order in 1922. He often sacrificed vacations at the Frassati summer villa in Pollone (near Turin) because, as he said, *"If everybody leaves Turin, who will take care of the poor?"*

Beneath the smiling exterior of the restless young man was concealed the amazing life of a mystic. Love for Jesus motivated his actions. Pier Giorgio felt a strong urge to be near the Blessed Sacrament. He loved spending long hours

in Eucharistic adoration. He loved bringing his friends with him to pray before the Blessed Sacrament before they would go out to parties at night! While his spiritual life was based on the sacraments, Pier Giorgio went beyond simply doing what is "required." Marian devotion, the Rosary, the Liturgy of the Hours, *Lectio divina* and annual retreats were as much a part of his life as skiing, mountain-climbing or cycling. He was an athlete, and he knew well that in order to *"reach the goal,"* as he was fond of saying, he had to push himself beyond the ordinary if he wanted to be a champion.

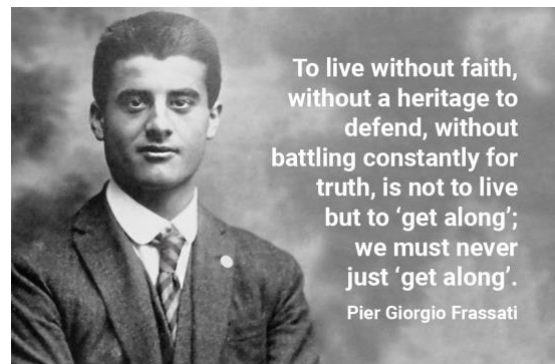
Pier Giorgio dealt with some of the problems and struggles of young people today. Athletic, full of life, always surrounded by friends, whom he inspired with his life, Pier Giorgio chose not to become a priest or religious, preferring to give witness to the Gospel as a lay person. He never founded a religious order or started a new ecclesial movement.



He led no armies, nor was he elected to public office. He was simply a young man who was in love with his family and friends, in love with the mountains and the sea, but especially in love with God. Just before receiving his university degree in mining engineering, he contracted poliomyelitis, which doctors later speculated he caught from the sick for whom he cared. His sickness was not understood. His parents, totally taken up by the agony, death and burial of his grandmother, had not even suspected the paralysis. Two days before his death, his mother kept on scolding Pier Giorgio for not helping her in difficult moments. Even in those final days, he did not forget his closest friends, the poor. Pier Giorgio's sacrifice was fulfilled at seven o'clock in the evening of July 4, 1925. He was only 24 years old. Death came even before he could complete his university degree. His funeral was a triumph. The streets of Turin were lined with a multitude of mourners who were unknown to his family: clergy and students, and the poor and the needy whom he had served so unselfishly for seven years.

God gave Pier Giorgio all the external attributes that could have led him to make the wrong choices: a wealthy family, very good looks, manhood, health, being the only heir of a powerful family. But Pier Giorgio listened to the invitation of Christ: ***"Come and follow me."*** He anticipated by at least 50 years the church's understanding and new direction on the role of the laity. Pope John Paul II, who had a strong devotion to Pier Giorgio Frassati from his own youth in Poland, beatified Frassati alone in St. Peter's Square on May 20, 1990, describing Pier Giorgio in his homily at the Beatification mass as the ***"man of the eight Beatitudes."***

Pier Giorgio has become one of the principal patrons of every World Youth Day. His life combined in a remarkable way political activism, solidarity, work for social justice, piety and devotion, humanity and goodness, holiness and ordinariness, faith and life. His canonization during the 2025 Jubilee for Youth recognizes his efforts in defending the faith and engaging in charitable works. He has given us a powerful example of how the Christian faith can intersect with all human experiences. May each of us find in Pier Giorgio Frassati what Jesus' Sermon on a Galilean hillside really meant.



### ***Official Prayer to St. Pier Giorgio Frassati***

***Father, You gave to the young Pier Giorgio Frassati the joy of meeting Christ and of living his faith in service of the poor and the sick. Through his intercession, may we, too, walk the path of the Beatitudes and follow the example of his generosity, spreading the spirit of the Gospel in society. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.***