

Boy set to become first millennial saint

[D theday.co.uk/boy-set-to-become-first-millennial-saint-4](https://www.theday.co.uk/boy-set-to-become-first-millennial-saint-4) 27 May 2024



'God's influencer': Carlo Acutis helped to spread Roman Catholic teaching online before his death aged 15 in 2006.

Should we believe in miracles? As Pope Francis prepares to make a young Catholic boy a saint, some people argue that the idea of sainthood is out of date.

What's happening?

A student cycling through an Italian town falls from her bike. Her head injury is so serious that doctors fear she needs risky brain surgery. But then she begins to breath, speak and move without help. Ten days later, she is better.

Today the **Catholic Church** says that this was a miracle. Soon after the accident, the student's mother travelled to Assisi, another Italian city, where she asked a teenage boy buried in a tomb to save her daughter's life.

Find out more

The boy was called Carlo Acutis. He died at the age of 15 in 2006. After his death, people began praying to Carlo to help with their health problems.

When a holy person is suggested as a saint, Church leaders need proof of at least two miracles that took place after someone prayed to them for help. The student cyclist is the second miracle from Carlo, meaning he should be made a saint soon.

Some say that saints inspire everyday believers to have more faith. "Saints show the way God loves, and that love transforms," argues one author.

But others say it is ridiculous to keep looking for miracles in the modern world. Today, many things can be explained by science.

According to a 2018 survey, 70% of young adults aged 16-29 in the UK were non-religious — more than at any other time in history.

By making this **Millennial** teenager a saint, the Church hopes to inspire more young people.

Should we believe in miracles?

Some say

Yes! Saints do not just belong in the **Middle Ages**. Amazing people are born in the modern world too. This boy could make more people believe.

Others think

No! Medical miracles actually happen quite often. But that does not mean that a saint was the reason — it just means we do not know why everything happens yet.

Six steps to discovery

1. Connect

How do you feel about this story? - Do you believe that miracles can happen?

2. Wonder

Some people say

"A strong positive mental attitude will create more miracles than any wonder drug."

Patricia Neal (1926 – 2010), American actress

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What do you think?

What questions do you have? - For example: How many people are made saints each year?

3. Investigate

What are the facts? - Pick out one thing we know for certain from this story and one thing we cannot say for sure.

4. Construct

What is your point of view? - If something unexpected happened to you, would you call it a miracle? Or would you search for a scientific answer?

5. Express

What do others believe? - Is it a good or bad thing that young people are not as religious as before? Discuss as a class. Is it true where you live?

6. Reflect

What might happen next? - Imagine that someone from your school is made into a saint. Write about it in the style of a newspaper report.

Glossary

Catholic Church - The word Catholic means "universal". A Christian denomination with over a billion followers worldwide, led by the Pope.

Tomb - A vault, usually underground, for burying the dead.

Survey - When you ask a group of people questions about what they think about a particular topic.

Millennial - A person born between the early 1980s and the late 1990s.

Middle Ages - The Middle Ages was the period in European history that came between ancient and modern times. It lasted from about 500 to about 1500.