

## **Presentation of the Process of Beatification of the Servant of God**

### **Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận**

This morning we participated in a solemn and happy atmosphere the opening of the process of the beatification of the Servant of God Cardinal **Francis Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận**. The process was started by the Diocese of Rome where the Cardinal spent the last years of his life, and it consists of four phases. Having received the 'No Objection' (*Nulla Osta*) from the Congregation for the Cause of Saints, the celebration of this morning was the first step towards the beatification and canonisation. We are now in the second of the four phases of the process.

The second phase will conclude with the recognition by the Church of the heroic virtues of the Servant of God, which consists essentially in an enquiry into the fame of his sanctity and heroic virtues.

This requires a complete documentation of the writings of the Cardinal and the testimony of those who have known him. A historical commission constituted last year, is engaged in this work. Thanks to the generous collaboration of many persons all over the world, and in a special way the active and constant support of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the delicate and complex work of this phase is progressing well. The Congregation for the Cause of Saints will then carefully examine all the documents, and when God wants, will declare the heroicity of the virtues of the Servant of God and confer on him the title of Venerable.

The third phase, the Beatification requires that there be a miracle obtained through the intercession of Cardinal Van Thuận, a miracle which will be carefully verified and recognised as such by the Church.

Finally, the process will conclude with the canonisation, which calls for another miracle. The Blessed will then be declared a Saint by the Church and the veneration his will be authorised wherever there is a community of believers. Obviously it is the Church which will publicly proclaim the sanctity of a person, but the sanctification of a person is the work of God.

In the meantime, it is necessary to pray much so that everything may proceed according to the plan of God. It is also necessary to know and to make known the teachings of the Servant of God and follow his example. For this we need the support of all of you and all those who find in the person of the Cardinal a point of reference for their life as human beings and as Christians.

Let us walk together, trusting in the grace of God towards that day, so much longed for, in which our Cardinal – described by Pope Benedict XVI as “*a witness of hope for all men all over the world, that great hope which will not set even in the nights of solitude*” (Enc. *Spe Salvi*, n.32) – will be declared Blessed.