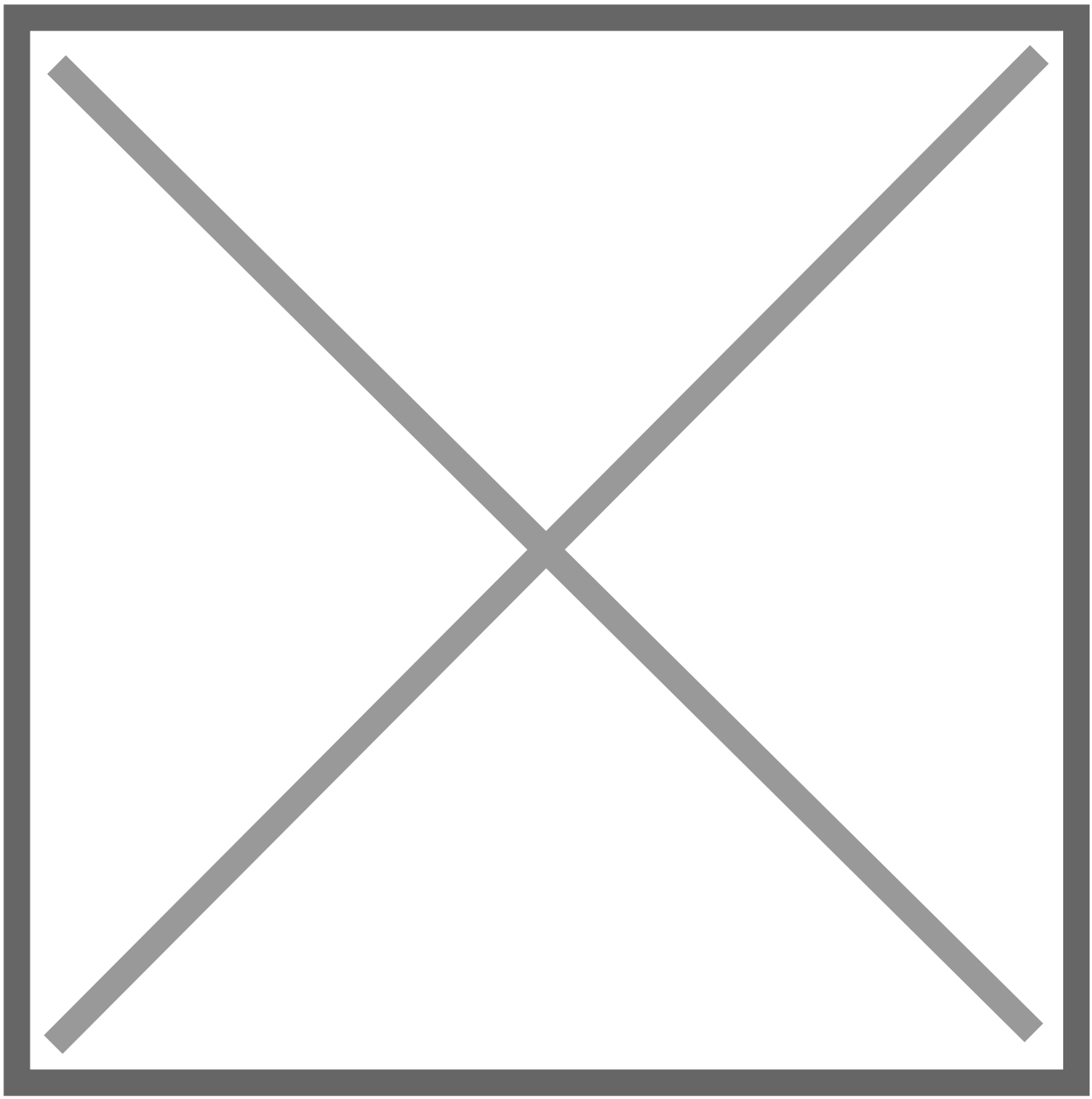
News



Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, pictured in an undated photo, is remembered as one of the most influential and innovative evangelists in American history. Once dubbed "God's microphone," Sheen announced God's truth in a nonconfrontational, yet no less life-giving, manner to untold millions through radio, print and television. (OSV News, file)



by OSV News

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Peoria, Ill. — February 9, 2026
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Venerable Fulton J. Sheen will soon be beatified, now that the Vatican has given the green light, the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, announced Feb. 9. No date or location for the beatification was given.

The announcement comes six years after the Holy See had postponed the beatification, initially scheduled for December 2019, only weeks before the event was to take place.

"The Holy See has informed me that the Cause for the Venerable Servant of God Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen can proceed to Beatification," Bishop Louis Tylka of Peoria said in a Feb. 9 statement. "The next step in the process is the celebration of the Beatification, in which Fulton Sheen would be declared Blessed."

He added, "We are working with the Dicastery of the Causes of Saints at the Vatican to determine the details for the upcoming Beatification."

The bishop said the date and event details will be released soon through celebratesheen.com, the website for Sheen's cause.

"Archbishop Fulton Sheen was one of the greatest voices of evangelization in the Church and the world in the 20th century," Tylka said. "I have long admired his lifelong commitment to serve the Church as a priest, rooted in his deep devotion to the Blessed Mother and the Eucharist. As he journeyed through the different stages of his life, his ability to share the Gospel and truly relate to people drew countless souls into an encounter with Jesus — one that transformed not only his life, but more

importantly, the lives of those he touched."

Sheen's cause for canonization, opened in 2002, has been stalled by two controversies — a public battle to relocate his remains from St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York to its current location, the side chapel of the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Peoria; and, more significantly, concerns that as bishop of the Diocese of Rochester, New York, from 1966-1969, the prelate might have overlooked sexual abuse by at least one former diocesan priest there.

The latter concern was magnified after the state of New York adopted lookback laws that allowed hundreds of abuse claims to be considered, with the Diocese of Rochester ultimately filing for bankruptcy. The bankruptcy was finalized in September 2025, after the establishment of a $256.35 million settlement fund for abuse survivors.

In July 2019, then-Bishop Daniel Jenky of Peoria announced Pope Francis had approved a miracle attributed to the intercession of Sheen, which led the way to the announcement he would be beatified. The announcement was made on Nov. 18, 2019, that Francis had called for the beatification to be held Dec. 21, 2019, in Peoria.

A little more than two weeks later, a Dec. 3, 2019, news release from the Diocese of Peoria said it had been informed the previous day that the Holy See had decided to postpone the Dec. 21, 2019, ceremony "at the request of a few members" of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops over the possibility that abuse-related concerns might surface.

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The Dec. 3 statement from the Diocese of Peoria said, "In our current climate it is important for the faithful to know that there has never been, nor is there now, any allegation against (Archbishop) Sheen involving the abuse of a minor."

However, a Dec. 5 statement from the Diocese of Rochester, New York, said it had "expressed concern about advancing the cause for the beatification of Archbishop Sheen at this time without a further review of his role in priests' assignments." The statement said the Rochester Diocese, prior to the Vatican announcement Nov. 18 that Francis approved the beatification, had provided

documentation expressing its concern to the Diocese of Peoria and the Congregation for Saints' Causes via the apostolic nunciature in Washington.

The one-time New York lookback window, part of the state's Child Victims Act, was open from August 2019 until August 2021.

In December 2024, Msgr. Jason Gray, executive director of the Archbishop Fulton John Sheen Foundation, told OSV News that "Sheen is clean. ... Not one accusation has been raised that impugned Sheen."

Gray said the foundation has examined "all of the pleadings" relevant to claims against the Rochester Diocese, and "there hasn't been anything that was brought up there" implicating Sheen.

Gray also told OSV News that "the desire to see Sheen beatified is increasing, and there is a growing devotion to him," as evidenced by a surge in visits to his tomb, requests for both relics and for his more than 50 books, and reports of favors and graces received through Sheen's intercession.