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Report: Beatification of John Paul II likely in 2011

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Pope John Paul II leans on his crosier as he celebrates Mass in St. Louis in this Jan. 27, 1999, photo. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

According to a report by veteran Italian Vatican writer Andrea Tornielli, a miracle attributed to the late Pope John Paul II has been approved by both the medical and theological consultants of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

In effect, that clears the path for the beatification of John Paul II sometime in 2011.

Tornielli suggests that the most likely dates would April 2, the anniversary of the pope's death; May 18, his birthday; or October 16, the anniversary of his election to the papacy in 1978.

Although Benedict XVI typically does not celebrate beatification ceremonies himself, preferring that they be led by the local bishop and staged in the saint's local diocese, in this case the beatification would be held in St. Peter's Square in Rome and is expected to draw a vast crowd.

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