

Mother Angelica for sainthood?

Q. Has the church ever considered Mother Angelica for sainthood? I recently read a book on her life, and she was an amazing woman. She not only started the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), but she had a radio station as well. I am sure that her strong faith, humor and common sense have touched many people. (Thornville, Ohio)

A. Mother Angelica, a member of the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration, died in Alabama on Easter Sunday 2016 at age 92. In 1981, with \$200 in capital, she had founded the Eternal Word Television Network, which today reaches more than 200 million homes in 145 countries and transmits 24 hours a day in several different languages with a variety of religious programming, including interviews, historical pieces and devotional services.

Three days after her death, Pope Francis spoke to members of the EWTN staff in Rome and, pointing to the sky, said of Mother Angelica, “She is in heaven.” A formal process of canonization, though, has yet to begin and normally does not start until five years after death — although exceptions have been made recently for St. Teresa of Kolkata and for St. John Paul II.

In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI conferred on Mother Angelica the highest papal honor for laypeople and clergy, the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Cross. Upon her death in 2016, tributes came from many Catholic leaders, including Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, then-president of the U.S. bishops’ conference, who said that Mother Angelica “reflected the Gospel commission to go forth and make disciples of all nations” and that, “like the best evangelists, she used the communications tools of her time to make this happen.”