

Pope to canonize Brazilian in May

VATICAN CITY - Pope Benedict XVI will canonize a Brazilian Franciscan during his May trip to Brazil and will declare four other new saints in June.

During a prayer service in the Apostolic Palace Feb. 23, the pope set May 11 as the date for the canonization of Blessed Antonio Galvao, an 18th-century Franciscan and founder of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Conception of Divine Providence.

The pope will be in Brazil May 9-13 to participate in the Latin American bishops' fifth general assembly; the papal schedule published by the Brazilian bishops in early February said the pope would celebrate a morning Mass May 11 at the Campo de Marte airfield in Sao Paolo.

Pope Benedict also announced the June 3 canonization at the Vatican of a Polish Franciscan, a Dutch Passionist, a French nun and a Maltese priest.

Father George Preca, founder of the Society of Christian Doctrine, will be the first native of Malta to be canonized.

Pope John Paul II beatified the Maltese priest in 2001 and in 2002 published a new set of mysteries for the rosary, the mysteries of light, focusing on events in the public life of Jesus. In 1957, Blessed Preca had drawn up a similar set of mysteries, also called the mysteries of light, and urged members of his community to meditate on them.

Born in 1880, Blessed Preca was ordained to the priesthood in 1906 and three months later gathered together the young people who would become the first members of the Society of Christian Doctrine, a group of celibate laypeople devoted to prayer, studying church teaching and instructing the young.

The three others who will be canonized with Blessed Preca are:

- Blessed Simon of Lipnica, Poland, a Franciscan who lived in the 1400s and was famous for his preaching. He died in 1482 of the plague, which he contracted by caring for victims of the disease during an outbreak in Krakow.

- Blessed Charles Houben, a 19th-century Dutch Passionist priest, known particularly for his ministry as a confessor and for insisting in his preaching that God's love could not be understood unless people understood the passion and death of Jesus.

- Sister Anne-Eugenie Milleret de Brou, also known as Sister Marie Eugenie of Jesus. In 1839, when she was just 22 years old, the Frenchwoman founded the Religious of the Assumption.