

Woman says she was healed through Pope Pius XII's intercession

The AP has an exclusive on a woman who believes she was healed through the intercession of Pope Pius XII. Could it be the miracle that leads to the beatification of the World War II-era pope? One American papal biographer thinks so.



Blessed Pius XII?

Maria Esposito was ready to give up. Wasted away at 42 kilos (92 pounds), she couldn't bear another dose of chemotherapy to fight the Stage IV Burkitt's lymphoma that had invaded her body while she was pregnant with her second child.

But as she and her family had done since she was diagnosed with the rare and aggressive form of cancer in July 2005, Esposito prayed to the man who had appeared to her husband in a dream as the only person who could save her: Pope Pius XII.

Esposito survived, cured after a single, six-week cycle of chemotherapy — a recovery that, she says, stunned her doctors and convinced her that the World War II-era pope had intervened with God to save her.

Esposito's case, which the 42-year-old teacher recounted to The Associated Press in her first media interview, has been proposed to the Vatican as the possible miracle needed to beatify Pius, one of the most controversial sainthood causes under way, given that many Jews say he failed to speak out enough to stop the Holocaust.

Pius' main biographer, American Sister Margherita Marchione, has championed Esposito's miracle case and personally presented it to the Vatican's No. 2 official,

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

Pope Benedict XVI moved Pius one step closer to possible sainthood in December 2009 when he confirmed that Pius lived a life of “heroic” Christian virtue. All that is needed now is for the Vatican to determine a “miracle” occurred.

“I’m certain that inside of me there was the hand of God operating, thanks to the intercession of Pope Pius XII,” Esposito said during a recent interview in her cheery dining room in the seaside town of Castellammare di Stabia on the Amalfi coast. “I’m convinced of it.”

The AP reports that some doctors and church officials aren’t as sure as Esposito. Read about that and much more here.