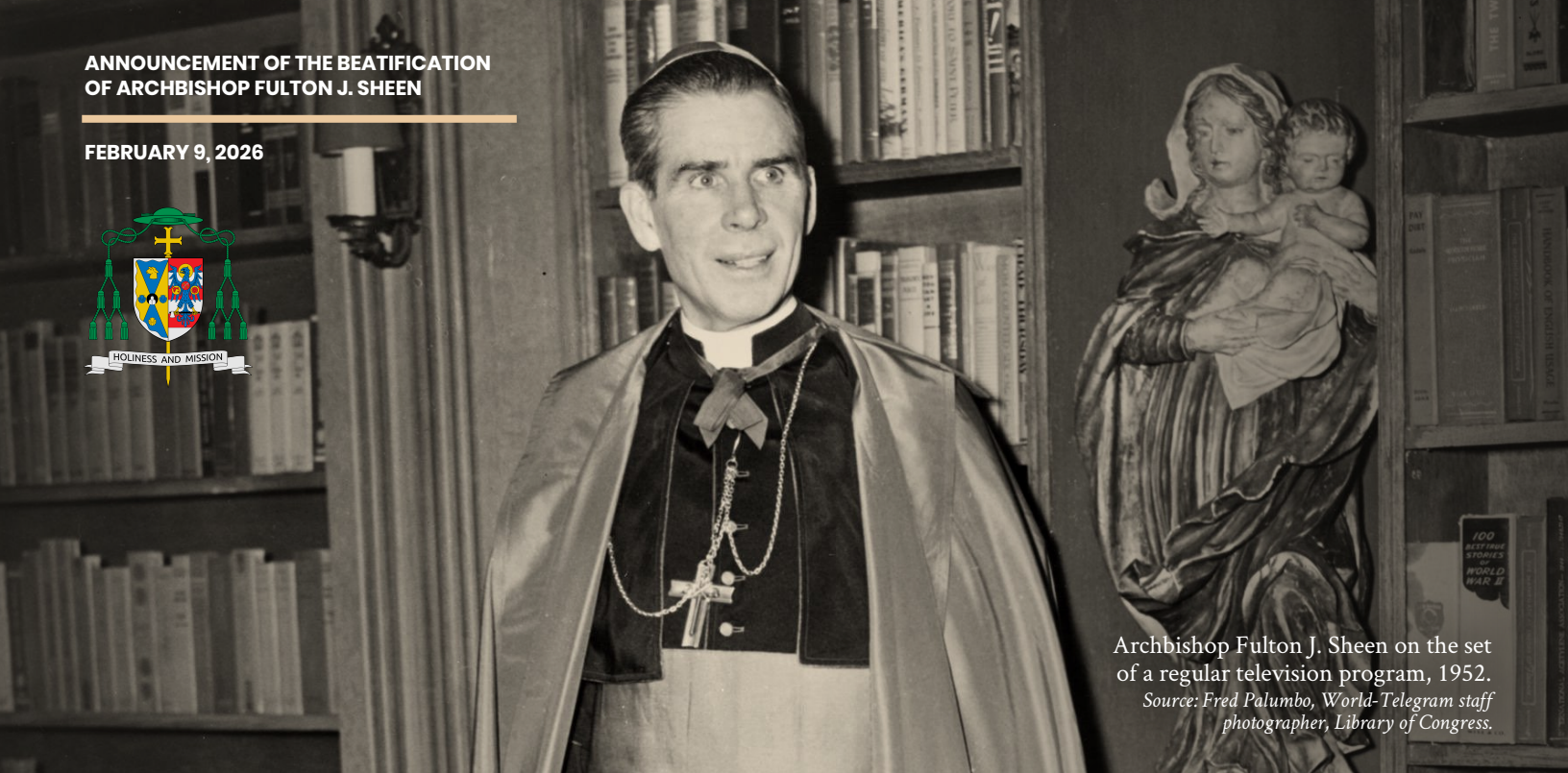


FEBRUARY 9, 2026



**BISHOP
JOHN O.
BARRES**

*is the fifth bishop
of the Diocese of
Rockville Centre.*

*His writings
are available at
bishopbarres.com.*

BISHOP BARRES AND THE CHURCH OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE GIVE GOD THANKS FOR THE BEATIFICATION OF ARCHBISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

The Church of the Diocese of Rockville Centre rejoices that Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen will be beatified.

As we rejoice and give thanks for this great moment of US and global Catholic Church history and celebrate the spirit of worldwide Catholic mission¹ that Archbishop Fulton Sheen lived so courageously and so compellingly, we ask that soon to be Blessed Fulton Sheen may intercede for a new creative Pentecost for global Catholic missionary communications and a new bold and rich harvest of vocations to the Catholic priesthood for the Catholic Church on Long Island and around the world.

As many of you know, I was baptized by Archbishop Sheen on October 2, 1960 at St. Augustine's parish in Larchmont, New York at the time that my convert Protestant minister father, Oliver Barres,

was working for the Archbishop as a writer for the Propagation of the Faith in New York City. Archbishop Sheen poured the waters of Baptism over my head and said with the powerful conviction that always animated his voice: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

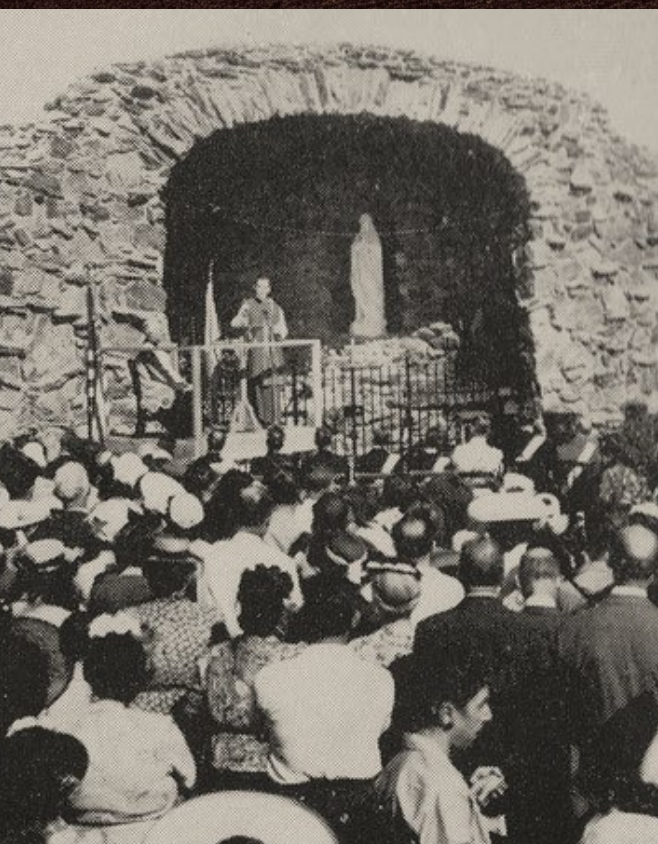
The logic of the Sacrament of Baptism for all of us is the call to "Holiness and Mission." And if you are a Catholic Bishop who was actually baptized by Archbishop Sheen, you have a particular and humble responsibility to be a Spirit-driven instrument of the Catholic evangelization of Long Island, metro New York and the entire world.

I thank God for the beatification of Archbishop Sheen and I thank God for each one of you and the inspiration you give me each day in the prayerful and



Rev. Fulton J. Sheen, early in his priesthood.

Source: Harris & Ewing, photographer. Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.



Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen preaching at the dedication of the Grotto at the Church of Notre Dame, New Hyde Park, August 5, 1945.

Source: Church of Notre Dame, New Hyde Park (www.notredamenhp.smugmug.com).

relentless way you evangelize.

Some of Archbishop Sheen's most well-known works which continue to uplift and inspire the world include:

1) His 1980 Autobiography *Treasure in Clay*: Archbishop Sheen reflects on the arc of his life, his spiritual life and his fire for global mission. He reflects on his daily commitment to a "Holy Hour" in front of the Blessed Sacrament and asserts "that as Christ is both divine and human, so the mission of every Christian is to be transcendent in lifting eyes to Heaven but also imminent in the care of the way he lives on earth."²

2) His classic *Life of Christ*: Archbishop Sheen urges us to read, know, love and live Matthew, Mark, Luke and John but his synthetic and striking reflections on the Gospels also help us to penetrate them. Here is a soul-stirring example: "Our Lord wanted the great drama of Calvary to be played not once, but for every age of His own choosing. He wanted men not to be readers about His Redemption, but actors in it, offering up their body and blood with His in the re-enactment of Calvary, saying with Him, 'This is my body and this is my blood.'"³

3) *Three to Get Married* (1951) is one of the timeless classics on the Sacrament of Marriage known for both its inspirational theology and spirituality of marriage and family, and its realism about the sanctifying daily Crosses that married couples carry together. The essential insight is that it takes "Three to Get Married" and that when Jesus is at the heart and center of a marriage with the Mission of Mercy of his Church, a married couple and their family, in the words of Pope Francis, "transform the world and history."

4) Archbishop Sheen's *Television Programs: The Catholic Faith Network* shows many of these consistently and will be doing some special programming on Archbishop Sheen to celebrate his Beatification and to pray for his eventual Canonization. The programs capture his compelling biblically and doctrinally enriched speaking and demonstrate his appeal to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

5) *The Priest is not His Own* (1963): This is one of the greatest American classics on the theology and spirituality of the priesthood.

Archbishop Sheen writes: "The moral and spiritual life of the priest is related in two ways to the Mystical Body of Christ. His holiness helps to make the faithful holy. The sanctity of the Christian community, in turn, helps to make him holy."⁴

In 1963, when *The Priest is not His Own* was published, Archbishop Sheen gave a copy to my father Oliver and my mother Marjorie but dedicated the gift to their two sons with an inscription in his own handwriting (which I include with a photo) on the inside cover of the book:

To John Oliver and William Michael (my younger brother):

In tribute to you and your good father who is associated with me in Mission work and in tribute to your good mother who reflects the virtues of Our Lady.

*With the Blessing of
Yours Faithfully in Christ,*

+Fulton Sheen

May the holiness and missionary spirit of soon to be Blessed Archbishop Fulton Sheen inspire each one of us to let the Holy Spirit lead and drive our lives on the great Catholic adventure of global worldwide mission! "God love you!"

+ John O. Barres

Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre

¹ See Bishop John Barres' article, "Embracing the Missionary Call," in *Mission: A Magazine for the Pontifical Mission Societies*, in the Fall 2024 issue. Bishop Barres pays tribute to Bishop Sheen's global missiology in the context of reviewing fundamental Catholic teaching on the missions.

² Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, *Treasure in Clay: The Autobiography of Fulton J. Sheen* (New York: Image Books/Doubleday, 1980), 113.

³ Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, *Life of Christ* (New York: Image Books/Doubleday, 1958 (2008 edition)), 403.

⁴ Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, *The Priest is not His Own*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963). 67.



THE PRIEST IS NOT HIS OWN

BY THE MOST REVEREND

Fulton J. Sheen, PH.D., D.D.

AGRÉGÉ EN PHILOSOPHIE DE
L'UNIVERSITÉ DE LOUVAIN

AUXILIARY BISHOP OF NEW YORK
NATIONAL DIRECTOR, WORLD MISSION SOCIETY
FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH

*To
John Oliver and William Michael
In tribute to you
and your good father
who is associated with
me in Mission work
and
In tribute to your good
mother who reflects the
virtues of Our Lady
With
The Blessing
Yours Faithfully in Christ
Fulton Sheen*

Inscribed copy of *The Priest Is Not His Own*, given to Oliver and Marjorie Barres, with the inscribed dedication to their young sons, John Oliver and William Michael.