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Office of Communications
Doug Mandelaro, Director
communications@dor.org
585-328-3210

Statement regarding the Beatification of the Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

The Diocese of Rochester appreciates the many accomplishments that Archbishop Sheen achieved in his lifetime in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ worldwide through media, thereby bringing the message of Jesus to a vast audience. His legacy in the area of communications made him a prophet in the future use of mass media to advance the teachings of Jesus, a phenomenon recognized by Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

At the same time, a person's cause for beatification must entail a review of the person's entire life. In this regard, the Diocese of Rochester has considered the tenure of Archbishop Sheen as the Bishop of Rochester. The Diocese of Rochester, prior to any announcements of the beatification, provided the Diocese of Peoria and the Congregation for the Causes of Saints through the Office of the Apostolic Nuncio with documentation that expressed concern about advancing the cause for the beatification of Archbishop Sheen at this time without a further review of his role in priests' assignments. Other prelates shared these concerns and expressed them. There are no complaints against Archbishop Sheen engaging in any personal inappropriate conduct, nor were any insinuations made in this regard.

The Diocese of Rochester did its due diligence in this matter and believed that, while not casting suspicion, it was prudent that Archbishop Sheen's cause receive further study and deliberation, while also acknowledging the competency of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to render its decision. The Holy See ultimately decided to postpone the beatification.

A beatification process reminds us that we are all called to be saints to live with the Lord eternally in heaven, praying that the Lord judges us worthy to behold Him face to face in that beatific vision that brings everlasting joy. From his place with the Lord, Archbishop Sheen enjoys eternal peace and joy in the everlasting presence of God, Our Father, whom he did serve with dedication and zeal for the salvation of souls.

The Diocese will be making no further comments.