



This picture, frequently referred to as *'The Rock and the Pebble,'* is a touching moment at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1979, when the visiting Pope John Paul II embraced Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen and said: **"You have written and spoken well of the Lord Jesus. You are a loyal son of the Church."** Archbishop Sheen died two months later on December 9th at the age of 84.

Fulton J. Sheen invariably signed his work with **J.M.J.** meaning: **Jesus, Mary and Joseph.**

#### Prayer for Canonisation:

Heavenly Father, source of all holiness, You raise up within the Church in every age men and women who serve with heroic love and dedication. You have blessed Your Church through the life and ministry of Your faithful servant, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. He has written and spoken well of Your Divine Son, Jesus Christ, and was a true instrument of the Holy Spirit in touching the hearts of countless people.

If it be according to Your Will, for the honour and glory of the Most Holy Trinity and for the salvation of souls, we ask You to move the Church to proclaim him a saint. We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*Imprimatur: +Most Reverend Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C., Bishop of Peoria*

#### The Reason for the Start Date:

The start date has been chosen because it is the anniversary of when Pope Benedict XVI, on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2012, officially recognised a decree from the Congregation for the Causes of Saints stating that Fulton J. Sheen lived a life of "heroic virtue," officially proclaiming him the Venerable Servant of God Fulton J. Sheen.

#### The Chaplet Beads:

Totally unique Chaplet Beads have been made for the Novena. A locally hand-crafted gold-coloured picture medal of The Venerable Fulton J. Sheen has

been made to order. This is attached at one end of the Chaplet which is made from light purple 'crackle' glass beads, with a gold-coloured crucifix at the other. These are available to buy as part of the Novena Pack which

also includes a professionally printed Prayer Card and a black and white photograph of The Venerable Fulton J. Sheen, at a cost price of £3.00. A limited number have been made and will be available to buy after the 9.00am and 11.00am Holy Mass on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> June.

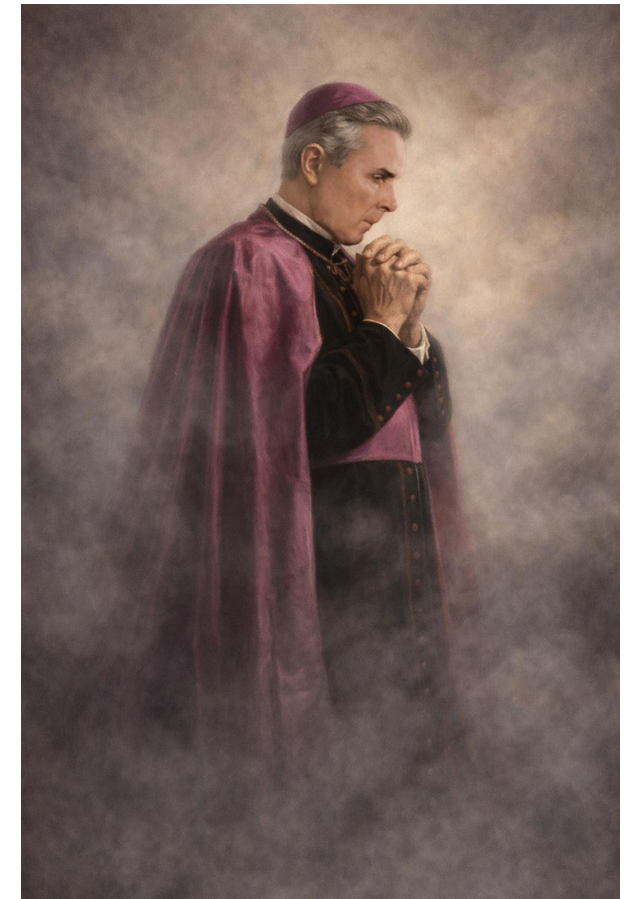
#### FULTON J. SHEEN CHAPLET



**AVAILABLE SOON**  
**See Janet Northing**

## The Catholic Parish of St Gregory the Great, Northampton

## The Novena of the Venerable Fulton J. Sheen



*Sunday 28th June  
to Monday 6th July, 2026*

## The Novena

The Novena will be offered in our Parish, and by others wishing to participate with the Intention of an increase in vocations to the Priesthood, and also for all those Priests who are in the first ten years of their Ministerial Priesthood.

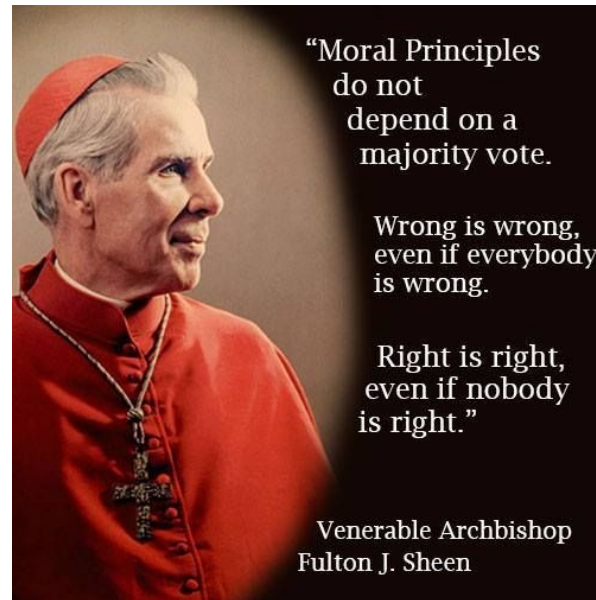
It may be that you would want to pray for a particular young man that you believe to be called to be a priest, or for a priest 'young in Orders' that you are acquainted with. The Novena packs will include Intention Cards to facilitate this, along with a unique set of Chaplet beads and the Novena Prayers.

### Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

On the 24<sup>th</sup> September this year Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (1895-1979) will be beatified at a Mass accommodating 100,000 people in St Louis, Missouri in the United States of America.

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen was a bishop of the Catholic Church in the United States of America. He is famed for his work on radio and television bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church through modern day media. He famously hosted "The Catholic Hour" on national station NBC. But his most famous programme was entitled "Life is worth living" during which the bishop would use a blackboard and chalk to talk through the moral issues of the day. So relevant is the message he shared that he gathered an audience in excess of 30 million people and videos from the series can be found on Youtube even today. In addition to his work on radio and television he also authored a number of books. The fruits of his exceptional ministry are to be seen in the number of vocations he inspired and continues to inspire; the continuing number of lives converted from error and darkness to the Catholic Faith; and his fidelity to the Lord and His Gospel.

Fulton J. Sheen was ordained to the priesthood in Peoria Cathedral in 1919. He quickly became a renowned theologian, and won the Cardinal Mercier Prize for International Philosophy in 1923. He



taught theology and philosophy at the Catholic University of America before being appointed Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of New York in 1951. He was made Bishop of Rochester in 1966 and upon his retirement he was made Archbishop of the titular see of Newport, Wales. During his retirement he came to England and Wales and visited his Titular church of St. Mary's, Newport in Wales.

Fulton J. Sheen also had a life-long connection with St Patrick's, Soho in London. He visited the parish most years, and was even known by one family as 'Uncle Fulty'.

The connection began in the mid-1920s, when he was invited for a cup of tea by a girl aged five. The girl was part of the O'Leary family, with whom the then Fr Sheen was to become lifelong friends. His yearly stopovers, in which he either stayed at the parish, at a hotel or with the O'Leary family, carried on until the 1960s, and he became known as the 'unofficial curate' of St Patrick's.

The Parish Priest in 2001, Fr Sherbrooke, said that some parishioners still remembered the priest who later became a television star. They described

him as 'always very courteous [and] very good-looking'. It is said that when the priest stayed at St Patrick's he was always opening the church because his 'transatlantic cousins' didn't get out of bed as early as he did.

Another story, which Fr Sherbrooke said was accurate, tells of Fr Sheen's encounter with a young actress who turned up drunk at St Patrick's at 3am. She said she would return the next day only if he promised not to ask her to go to Confession. He made the promise, and the following afternoon, as he gave her a tour of the church, without speaking a word he pushed her into a confessional. Three months later she became a Tyburn Nun.

The cause for his Canonisation was opened in 2002. In 2012 Pope Benedict XVI officially recognised his life of "heroic virtue" declaring him Venerable. On 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019 Pope Francis gave recognition to a miracle received through the intercession of the Venerable Fulton J. Sheen.

Given his connection with England and Wales, we call on all parishioners and friends to support the cause through prayer. May he be raised through the Grace of God to the Altar of the Saints.

