 Reading time: 3 min.

The diocese of Savoy and the city of Chambéry experienced three historic days on 16, 17, and 18 May 2025. An account of the events and future prospects.

The relics of Camille Costa de Beauregard were transferred from Bocage to the Church of Notre-Dame (the site of Camille's baptism) on Friday, 16 May. A magnificent procession then wound through the city streets from 8 pm onwards. After the Alpine horns, bagpipes took over to lead the march, followed by a flower-decked carriage carrying a giant portrait of the "father of orphans." Next came the relics, borne on a stretcher by young students from Bocage secondary school, dressed in splendid red sweaters emblazoned with Camille's words: *"The higher the mountain, the further we see."* Several hundred people of all ages followed in a cheerful, family-friendly atmosphere. Along the route, respectful onlookers paused in awe at this unusual parade.

Upon arrival at Notre-Dame, a priest led a prayer vigil accompanied by hymns from a beautiful youth choir. The ceremony unfolded in a relaxed yet solemn atmosphere. At the vigil's close, everyone filed past to venerate the relics and entrust personal intentions to Camille. A truly moving moment!

Saturday, 17 May. The big day! Since Pauline Marie Jaricot (beatified in May 2022), France had not welcomed a new "Blessed." Thus, the entire Apostolic Region was represented by its bishops: Lyon, Annecy, Saint-Étienne, Valence, etc. They were joined by two former archbishops of Chambéry: Monsignor Laurent Ulrich, now Archbishop of Paris, and Monsignor Philippe Ballot, Bishop of Metz. Two bishops from Burkina Faso had travelled to attend the celebration. Numerous diocesan priests came to concelebrate, along with several religious figures, including seven Salesians of Don Bosco. The Apostolic Nuncio to France, Monsignor Celestino Migliore, was tasked with representing Cardinal Semeraro (Prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints), detained in Rome for the enthronement of Pope Leo XIV. Needless to say, the cathedral was packed, as were the side chapels, forecourt, and Bocage—over 3,000 people in total.

What emotion when, after the reading of the papal decree (signed just the day before by Pope Leo XIV) by Father Pierluigi Cameroni, postulator of the cause, Camille's portrait was unveiled in the cathedral! What fervour filled that great nave!

What solemnity, upheld by the hymns of a magnificent inter-diocesan choir and the grand organ, masterfully played by Thibaut Duré! In short, a majestic ceremony for this humble priest who devoted his entire life to serving the least among us!

Coverage was provided by RCF Savoie (a French regional radio station part of the RCF network, Radios Chrétiennes Francophones), with interviews of key figures involved in Camille's cause, and by KTO (the French-language Catholic TV channel), which broadcast the glorious celebration live.

A third day, Sunday 18 May, crowned the festivities. Held at Bocage under a large marquee, it featured a thanksgiving Mass presided over by Monsignor Thibault Verny, Archbishop of Chambéry, flanked by the two African bishops, the Salesian Provincial, and several priests—including Father Jean François Chiron (13-year president of the Camille Committee founded by Monsignor Philippe Ballot), who delivered a remarkable homily. A considerable crowd gathered to pray and participate. After Mass, a "Camille Costa de Beauregard, Founder of Bocage" rose—selected by alumni and offered to dignitaries—was blessed by Father Daniel Féderspiel, Provincial of the Salesians of France (now available for purchase at Bocage's greenhouses).

After the ceremony, Alpine horns performed a concert until Pope Leo, during his *Regina Coeli* discourse, declared his joy at the first beatification of his pontificate: Chambéry's priest, Camille Costa de Beauregard. Thunderous applause erupted under the marquee!

That afternoon, various youth groups from Bocage—secondary school pupils, children's home residents, and scouts—took turns on stage to enliven the festivities. What a celebration!

And now? Is it all over? Or is there more to come?

Camille's beatification is just one step toward canonisation. The work continues, and you are invited to contribute. What remains to be done? Spread awareness of the new Blessed through every means, for many must pray for his intercession to obtain another miracle unexplained by science, which would allow the consideration of a new process and a rapid canonisation. Camille's holiness would then be proclaimed to the world. It's possible; we must believe! Let's not stop halfway!

Resources of various kinds include:

– the book *“Blessed Camille Costa de Beauregard: Nobility of Heart”* by Françoise Bouchard (Éditions Salvator);

– the book *“Praying Fifteen Days with Camille Costa de Beauregard”* by Father Paul Ripaud (Éditions Nouvelle Cité);

– the comic book: *“Blessed Camille Costa de Beauregard”* by Gaëtan Evrard (Éditions Triomphe);

– Videos on the “Amis de Costa” website and the *beatification footage*;

– Visits to memorial sites at Bocage in Chambéry, are possible by contacting either the Bocage welcome desk or directly, Mr. Gabriel Tardy, Director of La *Maison des Enfants*).

To everyone, thank you for supporting Blessed Camille’s cause—he deserves it!

Fr. Paul Ripaud, SDB