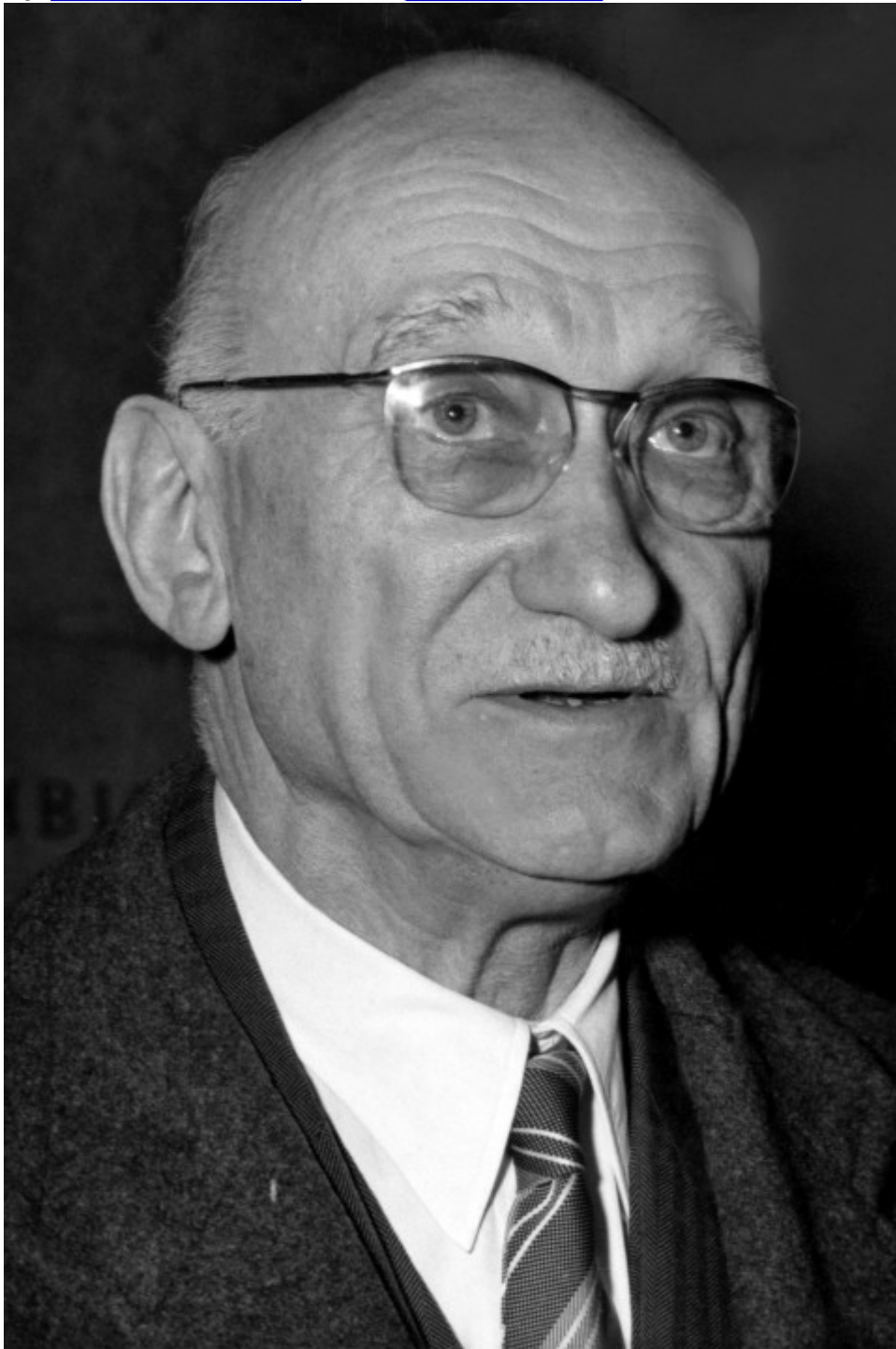


Robert Schuman, former French statesman, one step closer to sainthood

by [Frances D'Emilio](#) in the [July 14, 2021](#) issue



(AP Photo)

Robert Schuman, a French statesman who paved the way for the bloc that eventually evolved into the European Union, has moved ahead on the Catholic Church's path toward possible sainthood.

On June 19, Pope Francis approved a decree declaring the "heroic virtues" of Schuman, a former prime minister, finance minister, and foreign minister for France after World War II. In 1950, as foreign minister, he developed a plan to promote European economic unity in hopes of furthering peace.

Schuman died in 1963 after serving as the first president of the forerunner of the European Parliament.

The pope's decision means Schuman can be called "venerable" by the Catholic faithful. It is one of several steps in the generally lengthy process that can result in sainthood.

The Vatican described Schuman as a man of Catholic faith.

"Behind the action of the public man, there was the interiority of the man who lived the sacraments, who, when he could, would take to an abbey, who would reflect on the sacred Word before finding the shape of his political words," it said. —Associated Press