

le atrajo como campo de investigación, pero no evitó enfrentarse con ella. Las apreciaciones que, sobre la evolución de esta ciencia, hiciera en su libro *Los eclesiasticistas ante un espectador* han resultado ser del todo acertadas, lo que pone de manifiesto, una vez más, su fina intuición jurídica y su certero diagnóstico de los problemas que se plantean en el ámbito del Derecho Eclesiástico.

La mejor síntesis del resultado obtenido con esta obra la realiza el propio Escrivá, cuando alude a la simbiosis científica producida entre ambos interlocutores: «En definitiva, Javier Hervada puede afirmar rotundamente que, habiéndose visto reflejado en el espejo que le presentaba el autor de estas páginas, no ha olvidado quién es realmente. Y yo, en tanto que discípulo, no puedo sino confirmar su personalidad como científico y, muy particularmente, como maestro y canonista, siempre atento, siempre inquieto y profundamente comprometido con la renovación del Derecho de la Iglesia desde una exquisita articulación entre la lealtad al Magisterio y la rigurosa modernización científica hecha desde la más culta formación de jurista y universitario» (p. 13).

Parece claro que el autor ha conseguido alcanzar el objetivo que él mismo se había marcado: ofrecer una relectura de la obra científica de Hervada. En este sentido, se lee en el prólogo: «la osadía de la propuesta residía en el hecho de que el discípulo se ofrecía como guía y compañía del maestro en ese reto intelectual y científico. Por ello, aceptar dicha propuesta suponía un compromiso que solamente la generosidad de un maestro podía explicar» (p. 10). En este sentido, la brillantez intelectual de Hervada, mostrada nuevamente por su discípulo en esta obra, permitirá, probablemente, despertar inquietudes en algunos, confirmar el pensamiento de otros y suscitar la admiración de quien se adentre en su lectura.

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Juan Manuel MORA, *La Iglesia, el Opus Dei y «el Código da Vinci»: un caso de comunicación global*, Pamplona, Eunsa, 2009, 176 pp. = *La Chiesa, l'Opus Dei e il Codice da Vinci: un caso di comunicazione globale*, Roma, Edusc, 2009, 182 pp.

In *La Chiesa, l'Opus Dei e il Codice da Vinci: un caso di comunicazione globale*, Juan Manuel Mora, the current vice-rector for communications at the University of Navarre in Spain, offers an invaluable inside view of a major communications event: the international furor, in the years between 2003 and 2006, surrounding Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* and Sony's eponymous film and the subsequent communications response of the Prelature of Opus Dei. A professor of institutional communications at both the University of Navarre and Rome's Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, Mora was, during the episode he describes, the head of Opus Dei's communications office in Rome and thus in a privileged position to observe closely every step of the story.

Nevertheless, the book is not a memoir. Instead, it takes the form of a *case study* and is designed, above all, for classroom use. Refraining from evaluative judgments, Mora presents the facts of the case in a straightforward non-polemical manner that allows and invites academic reflection and debate. He provides a complete record of the major media coverage of the controversy, and a useful appendix includes many of the documents referred to in the text.

The first part of the book describes the marketing campaigns behind the *Da Vinci Code* novel and film. The book's initial publicity campaign, estimated by *Publisher's Weekly* to have cost about a million dollars, is an example of an expensive gamble that paid off: between 2003 and 2006, more than forty million copies of the book were sold (by January of 2008, the number of copies sold was sixty four million). From the beginning, the novel provoked questions about its pseudo-historical claims, particularly those regarding Christianity, the Catholic Church and Opus Dei, and drew extensive criticism from not only Christians but also Jews and non-believers.

In this section, Mora also describes the "buzz strategy" that Sony (the corporate owner of Columbia Pictures, Metro Goldwyn Meyer and its subsidiary United Artists) used to market the film version of the novel, a strategy that, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, cost forty million dollars in the U.S. alone. The strategy involved, among other things, a coordinated placement of references to the film in books, movies, websites, videogames, cellular phones, DVDs and other merchandise. In short, everywhere one turned, *The Da Vinci Code* was there. Sony also sought to defuse Christian opposition to the movie through a separate marketing campaign that specifically targeted Christians. In economic terms, the strategy paid off: despite harshly negative reviews, the film sold seven hundred and fifty-eight million dollars worth of tickets, the vast majority of that (seventy one percent) outside of the United States.

The much longer second part of Mora's book covers the response of Opus Dei's communications departments to the novel and the film. This response began with the publication of the novel in March of 2003 and involved, above all, the communications offices in New York City and Rome.

At first, the communications officers limited themselves to pointing out, in private correspondence with the book's editors at Doubleday, the erroneous and misleading passages dealing with Opus Dei. In September, Opus Dei's website ran a small note pointed out that *The Da Vinci Code* was a work of fiction that presented a false and negative view of Christianity, the Catholic Church and Opus Dei. Then, in January of 2004, the vicar of Opus Dei in New York wrote directly to Sony requesting that Opus Dei's name not be used in the upcoming film which had recently been announced. Sony responded that it would keep Opus Dei's concerns in mind, but, as things turned out, none of the problems were ever addressed, and in early 2006 a meeting of Opus Dei's communications officers from around the world was held in Rome to discuss how to face what seemed sure to be an avalanche of negative press as the release date of the film approached.

In this meeting, several issues were clarified. First, it was pointed out that the principal problem with the novel was not what it said about Opus Dei, but rather what it said about Jesus Christ and the Church. The misinformation regarding Opus Dei was seen to be a secondary matter.

Three possible avenues of approach were discussed. One was to adopt a strategy of silence, with the intention of allowing the storm to pass over, without adding any fuel to the controversy or the media's feeding frenzy. This strategy, however, ran the risk of seeming to acquiesce in the defamation of the Church and, in any case, the novel and film were already so well known that it is doubtful whether Opus Dei would *contribute* further to the publicity. The saturation point had already been reached and, many would say, passed. Another possible strategy involved a lawsuit against Dan Brown and Sony, but this ran the risk of initiating a prolonged legal battle in which Opus Dei and Catholics would be seen as attacking or censoring a novelist. The third strategy, which was the one eventually chosen, was to engage what was essentially a popular mediatic phenomenon on its own terrain and combat the misrepresentations of *The Da Vinci Code* on the field of mass communications.

As Mora notes, this third strategy—less defensive than silence and less confrontational than lawsuits—had the additional advantage of reflecting in practice the advice of Opus Dei's founder, Josemaría Escrivá, who urged his spiritual children to “drown evil in an abundance of good.” The two basic goals of this communication strategy would be positive: to tell the true story of the Church and Opus Dei; to issue an appeal for respect for religious beliefs. In this way, the looming crisis was seen as an opportunity. Having been handed a lemon, the communications directors of Opus Dei decided “to make lemonade.”

Mora then explains how this strategy functioned in practice and, in the end, succeeded. Above all, it involved a policy of maximum availability and openness toward news outlets of all sorts (newspapers, journals, magazines, radio, television, internet), which resulted in a steady stream of information about Opus Dei throughout the spring of 2006, prior to the film's release. Here, Mora provides an overview of the various mediatic initiatives—official and unofficial—undertaken by faithful of the Prelature of Opus Dei and a detailed statistical account of the news coverage in the run-up to the film. The numbers are impressive. There were, for example, ten major television documentary reports on Opus Dei between May of 2005 and June of 2006.

The result of this strategy was what one U.S. newspaper referred to as Opus Dei's *charm offensive*, a light-hearted but persistent presentation of the real faces and ideals behind the false caricature displayed in *The Da Vinci Code*. Because of the global interest in the novel, these news stories about Opus Dei were often carried in countries where Opus Dei did not exist and in media outlets that had never previously mentioned Opus Dei. Thus, they provided an introduction to Opus Dei and opened up many new contacts, as was graphically reflected in the huge surge in visitors of the prelature's website and searches for *Opus Dei* on Google, which doubled between 2005 and 2006.

In an ironic way, the sometimes-hostile curiosity provoked by Dan Brown's novel became an invitation to talk freely about aspects of Catholic faith and history that rarely receive media attention and a chance for many people to become acquainted with the relatively-unknown Opus Dei, an acquaintanceship that, in some cases, has even led some to join Opus Dei. In his summary of the communications lessons learned from the experience, Mora captures the paradoxically-positive cumulative effect of his strategy with the words that appeared as a headline in *Il Corriere della Sera* on the day of the film's release: "L'Opus Dei che sorride (e vince)", "Opus Dei Smiles (and Wins)".

John Wauck

Mary T. OATES - Linda RUF - Jenny DRIVER (eds.), *Women of Opus Dei. In their own words*, New York, Crossroad, 2009, 222 pp.

*Women of Opus Dei: In Their Own Words* offers a unique contribution to the still relatively new literature on Opus Dei. Edited by Marie Oates, journalist, novelist and public relations consultant, Linda Ruf, CPA, wife and mother, and Dr. Jane Driver, a physician and Harvard Medical School Instructor, *Women of Opus Dei* opens the door to the much needed conversation about what it means to be a woman in Opus Dei. *Women of Opus Dei* offers first hand accounts of Catholic women from a variety of cultural, socio-economic, family and professional backgrounds, who have found in Opus Dei a personal pathway to developing a closer relationship with God. Each of them describes in her own words what it looks like to discover God in her daily circumstances—from the most seemingly mundane work of changing diapers to the world of high stakes decision-making.

Of the fourteen women featured in this book, eight are married (most have children) and six are celibate. They are leaders—medical professionals, engineers and scientists, corporate executives, founders of NGOs, educators, entrepreneurs, hospitality professionals, stay at home mothers with ivy league educations and more.

While several books have attempted to illuminate what Opus Dei is from a theological and canonical perspective—e.g., Fuenmayor et al's *The Canonical Path* and Rodríguez et al's *Opus Dei in the Church*, and more recently, to describe Opus Dei as a response to a need in the universal Church Martin Rhonheimer's *Changing the World: The Timeliness of Opus Dei*—few works have articulated what it means to be a member of Opus Dei. Several works have attempted to describe a vocation to Opus Dei but often in a formal, detached way presenting generalized accounts of what members' commitments to Opus Dei entail. Scott Hahn broke new ground in his *Ordinary Work, Extraordinary Grace: My Spiritual Journey in Opus Dei* (Doubleday Religion, 2006), providing a personal account of his vocation. The reader walks in the author's shoes and witnesses his life as a university professor, Scripture scholar,