

Chronicle of the Congress (April 12 to 16, 2023)

The motu proprio *Ad charisma tuendum* (July 14, 2022) modified two articles of the apostolic constitution *Ut Sit*, by which the Prelature of Opus Dei was erected in 1982, in order to bring them in line with the norms established by the recent apostolic constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* (March 19, 2022) on the Roman Curia. The motu proprio also indicated that the statutes of Opus Dei should be “suitably adapted, at the proposal of the Prelature itself, for approval by the competent organs of the Apostolic See.” For this purpose, the Prelate, Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz, convoked an extraordinary general congress of Opus Dei in Rome. It was held during Easter week, from April 12 to 16. 274 members of the Prelature, 126 women and 148 men, took part.

An Extraordinary General Congress is an assembly of the faithful of Opus Dei, along with the Prelate, to study and propose decisions on certain questions concerning the life of the Prelature. According to the statutes of Opus Dei (nos. 130 and 133), an Extraordinary Congress is one that is neither motivated by the need to propose to the Pope the appointment of a new Prelate (like the Elective General Congresses), nor does it have a fixed time for meeting (like the Ordinary General Congresses, which are held every eight years). The Extraordinary General Congress is convoked when circumstances require it. This is the case of the one held in April, convoked by the Prelate with the deliberative vote of his councils to study the adaptation of the statutes requested by the motu proprio *Ad charisma tuendum* (cf. art. 3).

In his homily at the beginning of the Congress, the Prelate referred to the Gospel of the Mass, especially the desire of the disciples from Emmaus that Jesus stay with them. Monsignor Ocáriz made this request his own in the current circumstances. He asked our Lord to guide the work of the Congress with his grace, so that it might carry out its tasks “in full fidelity to the spirit received from St. Josemaría, which necessarily includes union with the Roman Pontiff, the visible principle of unity in the Church. This holy Church, of which Opus Dei is a part and which it wishes to serve, following the example of St. Josemaría, as the Church wants to be served.”

On the same day, the working sessions began, in which the different proposals for changes to the statutes (where these were deemed necessary) were studied and voted on, in accord with what was requested in *Ad charisma tuendum*. The congress members came from all the countries in which the Prelature carries out its apostolate. They ranged in age from 35 to 87 years old, and hence could offer a broad variety of experiences during the discussions on the proposals for changes.

The sessions ended on the 16th. The conclusions were subsequently presented to the Dicastery for the Clergy, the body of the Holy See with competence over personal prelatures. At a later date, the Holy See will communicate the final modifications to the statutes approved by the Pope, who is the legislator in this matter.

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