

Yes; and not only during these 25 years, but throughout the entire life of Opus Dei. Faced with any need, we have always had recourse to Mary. As soon as St. Josemaría began to sense that God was asking something of him, he always relied on our Mother. Among many other indications of this, I could mention the Marian pilgrimages he made to her shrines all over the world, including Montserrat, and especially Our Lady of Mercy in Barcelona. His visits to that basilica are closely connected to Opus Dei's juridical path, which came to a happy conclusion 25 years ago. Both at present and in the future, we will always be in need of Mary's help. During the Marian year that the Work is currently observing, I have encouraged all the Prelature's faithful to pray the Holy Rosary with greater fervor, and to spread it among their colleagues, friends, and relatives. It is a very timely prayer.

## China

November 16, 2008

*Interview granted to Kung Kao Po, Catholic diocesan Weekly of Hong Kong (interview by K. C. Wong)*

*This year is the 25th anniversary of Opus Dei's establishment as a personal prelature of the Catholic Church after a long canonical journey. As the head of Opus Dei do you think that this is its final configuration?*

Yes, the personal prelature is the proper canonical form for Opus Dei

according to the light St. Josemaría received in 1928, and therefore its present situation corresponds to this juridical configuration.

*In viewing a personal prelature as an authentic reflection of the theology of Vatican II as far as the role of the lay faithful is concerned, do you think that this structure is appropriate for the challenges of the twenty-first century?*

Of course the Second Vatican Council has inspired many other structures as well, in addition to strengthening some that already existed. I think that a personal prelature is also a pastoral solution well-suited to the world in which we live with its specific challenges. A personal prelature accords well with the challenges presented by a multicultural and mobile society, as a hierarchical structure headed by a prelate whose jurisdiction is circumscribed by a specific pastoral task that is carried out by the priests and lay faithful of the prelature. I am thinking here especially of the advantages it presents in fostering the formation of the laity, a decisive aspect of the Church's evangelizing activity: for example, to help strengthen families, to bring Christ's light to society through work, to resist the lure of consumerism through the witness of a Christian life.

*Opus Dei is the first institution to be approved as a "personal prelature" in accord with the new Code of Canon Law. Do you think that others will follow in the near future?*

I don't know if we will have them in the near future, but it wouldn't

surprise me. I repeat: it seems to me to be a pastoral instrument that is flexible and very effective. At least, that has been my experience.

*Regarding The DaVinci Code by Dan Brown, what do you have to say about its influence on Opus Dei? Has this book, and the commotion that it caused, had any influence on Opus Dei's strategy in relation to the communications media.*

Millions of people know what the reality of Opus Dei is. And for these persons, the caricature of the Church and of Opus Dei—as part of the Church—that this book presents could not produce anything but sadness. While those who didn't know Opus Dei before and became interested in it, have had an opportunity to learn more about it. I give thanks to God because in many cases this curiosity has given rise to the desire to seek Christ, to find him, and to love him, with a serious Christian commitment. In some cases it has led to a radical conversion; in other cases, to a specific vocation from God (to Opus Dei, for example).

*Some people have criticized Opus Dei as being attracted to power. What do you have to say about power in the Church?*

Like all Catholics, the faithful of Opus Dei seek to serve others. This is the example Christ gave. The service that Opus Dei provides to the dioceses in which it is present consists in contributing to the spread of Christ's message in the middle of the world. One only has to ask the thousands of people who receive Christ-

ian formation in centers of the Prelature to discover the role that Opus Dei plays in their lives: how it helps them to commit themselves in a Christian way to the improvement of society, to participate more fully in parish life, to more fully support, pray for, and love their bishop and the other pastors.

## Argentina October 2, 2008

*"Opus Dei: 80 Years of Sowing Peace." An article published in the Diario Clarín on the 80th anniversary of the Foundation of Opus Dei*

Eighty years have gone by since October 2, 1928, feast of the Holy Guardian Angels. On that day St. Josemaría—by divine inspiration, as Pope John Paul II declared in the papal document *Ut Sit*—founded Opus Dei. Pope Benedict XVI, when he was still Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, in a homily given at a Mass of thanksgiving for the beatification of Opus Dei's founder, stated that "Josemaría Escrivá saw this call as addressed not to himself alone, but above all as a message to pass on to others: to encourage them to strive for sanctity, and to gather a community of brothers and sisters for Christ." Well aware of this responsibility, "he journeyed untiringly through several continents, speaking to everyone to encourage them to be holy, to live the adventure of being