

fail to go also to our Lady, our Mother. Mary is the one who, filled with the Holy Spirit, best knows her Son. Amen.

Interviews

Interview published in Iglesia en Aragón (June 26, 2019).

This interview took place during the Prelate's visit to Saragossa (Spain) in April 2019.

What are the Prelate of Opus Dei's thoughts when visiting the city where St. Josemaría was ordained a priest?

Visiting Saragossa leads me to give abundant thanks to God for the fruits of Christian life and holiness that this city has witnessed: from the first centuries of Christianity, as witnessed by the martyrs venerated in the Basilica of St. Engracia, to the present day. This stay in Saragossa evokes very special memories of St. Josemaría's years as a seminarian. These were years of intense prayer (with his daily visits to Our Lady the Pillar), of formation, and of asking for light to see the vocation of service that God wanted for him. It gave me special joy to be able to celebrate Holy Mass in the church of San Carlos, where St. Josemaría received his ordination to the diaconate and priesthood, and where he spent so many hours in prayer.

What was St. Josemaría's family like in Barbastro, where he was born?

St. Josemaría's family was a Christian family like so many others. And it was in the heart of his family that he began to prepare for his first communion. His mother, Dolores, personally prepared him for his first confession. In addition, he received help to prepare for his first communion in the school of the Piarists in Barbastro. A Piarist religious, Father Manuel Laborda de la Virgen del Carmen (Father Manolé, as the students called him) was in charge of preparing him. This religious taught him a prayer to enkindle his desire to receive our Lord. St. Josemaría continued to use this prayer his whole life, with great gratitude to Father Manuel, and he spread it throughout the world.

What mark did his pastoral mission in small rural parishes like Fombuena and Perdiguera leave on St. Josemaría?

St. Josemaría said that his time spent in those parishes left a deep mark on his soul and did him great good. Many years after this period in his life, which he never forgot, he recalled those experiences in rural parishes with great affection. I remember him saying: "They did me a colossal good – colossal, colossal! How eagerly I remember that experience!"

How did St. Josemaría live friendship and carry out apostolate at the University of Saragossa?

When he finished his fourth year of theology, he also began to

study at the law school, then located in the Plaza de la Magdalena. There he made friends with his classmates, who fondly called him the “*curilla*,” the little priest. He formed friendships with them in a very natural way. His behavior was both very priestly and deeply human. Perhaps that is the reason why, when he was ordained a priest, some of them chose him as their regular confessor.

What did Our Lady of the Pillar and Torreciudad mean in St. Josemaría’s life?

Devotion to Our Lady of the Pillar began in St. Josemaría’s life when his parents, with their “Aragonese piety,” as he liked to say, instilled it in him. This is something quite natural in so many families in Aragon. Later, when he lived in Saragossa, this piety was expressed in daily visits to the holy chapel, like so many people in Saragossa. Our Lady of Torreciudad is closely linked to his own life, as is well known, by a favor granted by our Lady in the first years of his life.

How does the work of the members of Opus Dei contribute to the good of the dioceses where they live?

The people of the Work, like other Catholics, are faithful of the dioceses in which they live. With their defects and limitations, they strive, like so many others throughout the world, to do their work well, to take care of their families, to create a healthy environment around them, to assist

those most in need, to help their friends discover God’s love. All this enriches Christian life in the diocese, as do the actions of all Christians who try to live their faith wherever they are. At the same time, quite a few faithful of Opus Dei collaborate in parish and diocesan associations to the best of their abilities.

Does Opus Dei have something of its founder’s Aragonese character?

That is an interesting question. As an institution of the universal Church, we can’t say that there is something, so to speak, strictly “Aragonese” about it. But there is no doubt that, since St. Josemaría was from Aragon, this influenced his way of explaining things, his constancy and determination. He sometimes used Aragonese idioms, although he tried to keep them to a minimum, since his message had to be understandable to people all over the world.

The current Metropolitan Seminary of Saragossa is the institution that inherited the seminary of St. Francis of Paola – and also the Conciliar Seminary – where St. Josemaría was formed. What intuitions of the saint do you think are important for the formation of our seminarians?

Perhaps more than intuitions we can speak of the lights that St. Josemaría received from God to carry out his mission: to remind men and women that they are called to holiness and to a personal relationship with Jesus, also through their daily work. From

this perspective, it seems important to awaken, also in those preparing for the priesthood, the awareness that our Lord is calling them to be holy, both as seminarians and later as priests. The goal that St. Josemaría liked to set forth can also be helpful for seminarians: to have the piety of children and the doctrine of theologians.

St. Josemaría is a person from Aragon open to the whole world, just as the call to holiness that he always preached is universal. Does his message continue being relevant?

I think the relevance of his message has been clearly highlighted by the Second Vatican Council and by the recent apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*, in which Pope Francis reminds us that God “wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence,” and in which he encourages us to strive “for all that is great, better and more beautiful, while at the same time being concerned for the little things, for each day’s responsibilities and commitments.”

Addresses

An address given by Monsignor Fernando Ocariz at a conference entitled “The Company and its Social Responsibilities,” marking IESE’s 60th anniversary, Barcelona (5 July 2019).

IESE and the Role of Business in Society

Taking part in this conference for the sixtieth anniversary celebration of IESE is a great joy for me, and gives me the opportunity to express once again my gratitude to Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, God’s instrument to begin this initiative. My gratitude also goes out to all those who have contributed in the past and to you who are working now to turn this initiative into a Business School with great prestige that is offering an important service to society.

I also want to extend my congratulations to all the associated Business Schools that follow its example, echoing its message all over the world, each according to its specific geographic and social circumstances as well as the constitution its founders freely and responsibly gave it and the course marked by its current directors, a representation of which are here today. I unite myself in a special way to words spoken here at IESE by the previous Prelate of Opus Dei, Bishop Javier Echevarría, with reference to IESE’s work and that of centers inspired by its approach: “It has proven to be a much-needed endeavor for today’s world, and will always be so. For also in this area of professional activity, Christians must be and act as salt of the earth and light of the world (cf. *Mt* 5:13-14).”¹

The beginnings of IESE

1. “Directing Companies with Christian Outlook,” in *Dirigir empresas con sentido cristiano*. Pamplona: EUNSA, 2015, 47-48.