



The Servant of God

José María Hernández Garnica

Newsletter of the Office for the Causes of Saints, Prelature of Opus Dei.

Dedicated to God and to men



“He had a certain difficulty in expressing himself. But he had the gift of getting on with people; he inspired great confidence; he had a great sense of humour; and he knew how to relate a joke with great refinement, affection and a sense of timing.”

Ever since Fr José María met Opus Dei, he was impressed by the text of Christ’s new commandment which the Founder had wanted to be placed in all the Centres used for the apostolic work with young people: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35). Fr José María’s love for others was a consequence and a sign of his faith and love for God. His charity with his neighbour was strong and sincere, without making distinctions of persons, and directed to fostering an authentic desire for sanctity among those he treated with, so that they would be happy on earth, and then in Heaven. He was a man of great apostolic zeal and a magnanimous heart.

That is how the testimony of José Gabriel de la Rica, who knew him in Germany, can be explained. “When I met him in 1963, although the Work in Germany was very small, he talked about what it would be like in the future with such conviction that it could not be understood without gigantic faith. Without any material means and having his feet very much on the ground, he encouraged us to get to know people, and to work everywhere, even though we did not see any apostolic fruit. He worked thinking about the future, without having any doubt that the Work would develop

in every country, as in fact it did.”¹

Alejandro Digón states: “He did not cease to start any apostolic task, even if it was difficult, because he knew that the Lord would provide the increase.”² Alfonso Par also remembers those early years in Germany, where Fr José María had gone when he was over fifty years old: “When he came everything changed. That is to say, we felt sure, protected and directed. It was like a change from a cloudy day to splendidly sunny day. The same external reality of the work, with its objective difficulties, but now full of colour, meaning and life, with a clear vision and optimistic perspectives.”³

Those who knew him, know that Fr José María did not express himself easily in other languages, but his enthusiasm and affection moved people more than his words did. He looked for examples that would make what he was saying more understandable, according to the testimony of María Jesús Luna: “I think he had a certain difficulty in expressing himself. But he had the gift of getting on with people; he inspired great confidence; he had a great sense of humour; and he knew how to relate a joke with great refinement, affection and a sense of timing.”⁴

1 Testimony of José Gabriel de la Rica, J. C. Martín de la Hoz, *Abriendo horizontes*, Barcelona 2012, p. 68

2 Testimony of Alejandro Digón, *ibid.*, p. 69

3 Testimony of Alfonso Par, *ibid.*, p. 70

4 Testimony of María Jesús Luna, *ibid.*, p. 72



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Prayer for private devotion

Lord God, you wished to count on your servant and priest José María to spread the call to holiness in everyday life in many parts of the world. Help me to get to know and follow Jesus Christ closely in my ordinary work, so that I can convey to many souls the joy of responding to our Christian vocation. Deign to glorify your servant José María and grant me, through his intercession, the favour I ask of you ... (*here make your request*). Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father.

In conformity with the decrees of Pope Urban VIII, we declare that there is no intention of anticipating in any way the judgment of the Church, and that this prayer is not intended for public use.

Those who have obtained favours through the intercession of the Servant of God Fr. José María Hernández Garnica are asked to let us know by writing to us at the address shown on this page.

Confidential information

At a bus stop I lost a briefcase that contained important and confidential information. With great concern I commended the case to Fr José María, asking that it end up in good hands. Almost immediately, my mobile phone rang and a very pleasant sounding man told me that he had found it. Given the importance of its contents, he had decided to look after it personally, and he would wait for me at his home. With great joy I went to collect it and told my benefactor what had happened, giving him a prayercard of Fr José María, which he received very gratefully.

F.M.G.

A doctorate, with neither holidays nor weekends free

A few years after finishing my undergraduate studies in Spain I wanted to do my doctoral thesis in Law, but with my family and professional obligations, this was not possible. Some years later I went to live in Latin America, a continent thousands of miles away. In my new country I also had professional, social and family obligations, and work for a charity, so that I had no time either.

Years went by. I ceased being a young student and became a mature professional. Then a biography of Fr José María Hernández Garnica came into my hands. I read that he had been very busy with jobs given to him by St Josemaría, the founder of Opus Dei. But he had found time to do two doctorates, one in mining engineering in 1940 and another in natural sciences in 1970 when he was much older. As I was still interested in doing my doctorate, I took it up again, and during the last two years of my doctorate, I asked him to have some time and to be successful in the development of the suggested theme, arbitration. I also went a couple of times to Barcelona, to visit the church of Montalegre, to ask him to help me. And I asked friends to visit Chiqui's crypt, to ask for my doctorate.

Finally, after spending several years dedicated to work and to my obligations, during which I did not have any holidays or weekends free, I defended my doctoral thesis last November, receiving a unanimously exceptional *cum laude*, and congratulations from the tribunal. Without the help of Fr José María Hernández Garnica I would not have been able to finish the thesis.

I promised Chiqui that as soon as I did the defence of my thesis, I would write this favour down so that his intercession would be known and this would encourage those in intellectual work to appeal to him. I enclose a donation for the cause of his beatification.

M.A.E. (Panama)

Publications

- **José Carlos Martín de la Hoz:** *Abriendo horizontes*. Ed. Església de Santa Maria de Montalegre, Barcelona 2010.
- **José Carlos Martín de la Hoz:** *Roturando los caminos*. Ed. Palabra, Madrid 2012.
- **Documentary video José María Hernández Garnica.** *Por los caminos de Europa* (27 min), Goya Producciones, Madrid 2008.
- **Hernández Garnica, José María:** in the *Diccionario de San Josemaría Escrivá*, ed. Monte Carmelo, Burgos 2013

News of the Cause

The *Positio* on the life, virtues and reputation for holiness has now been presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome.

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