

HARAMBEE 2002



Harambee 2002 is a solidarity fund for the financing of projects of education and training in sub-Saharan Africa, established by the Organizing Committee for the canonization of Josemaría Escrivá.

*In Swahili the word **Harambee** means "all together."*

It is the password used when undertaking a project benefitting the whole community. Each one gives what he can: all give and all receive the benefits.

The collection of funds has not ended.

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For further information see: www.harambee2002.org

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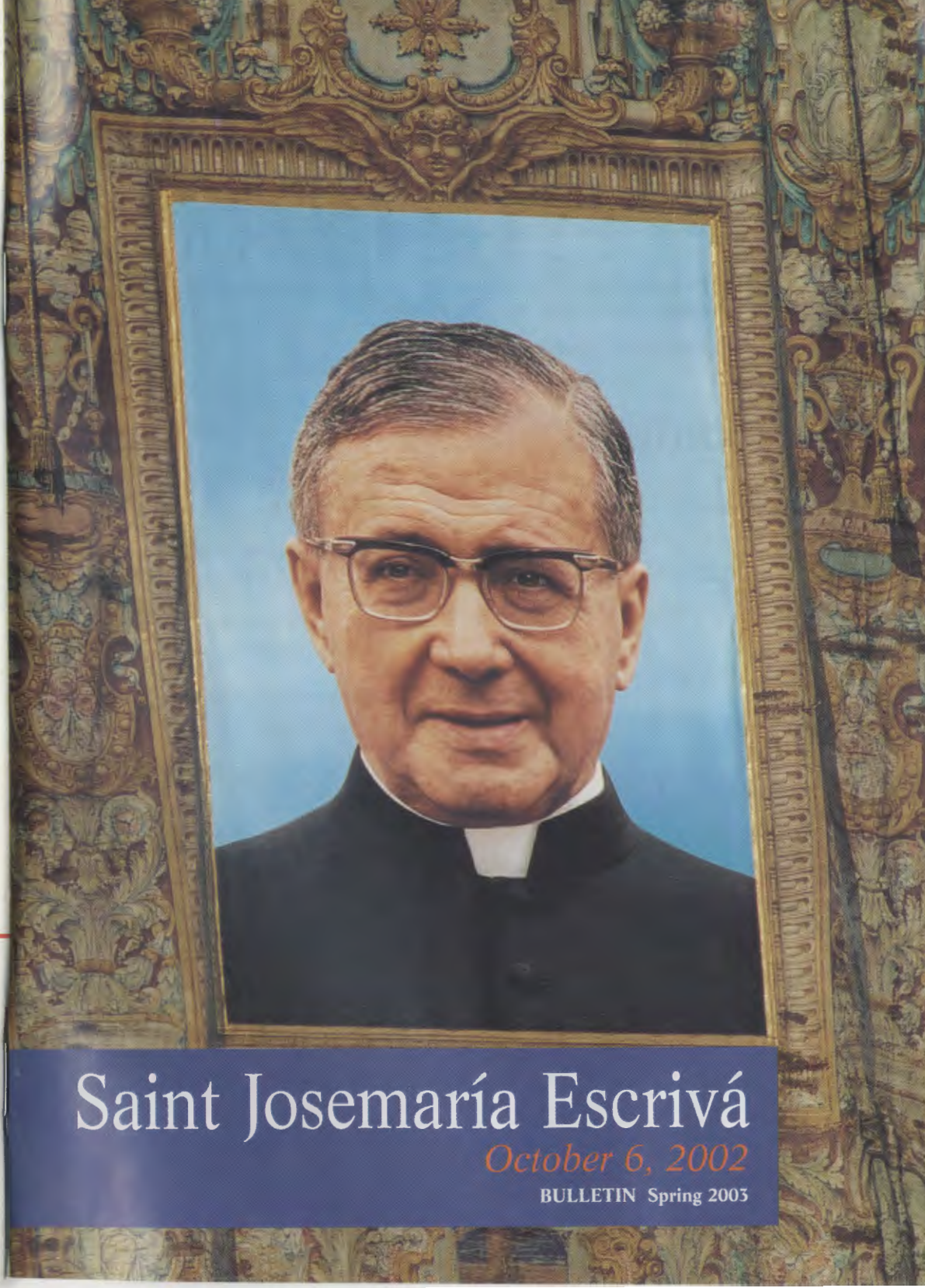
*Prelature of Opus Dei
Office for the Causes of the Saints
139 E. 34th Street
New York, NY 10016*

e-mail: ocs@opusdei.org

Imprimatur: ✠ Javier Echevarría, Prelate of Opus Dei

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Saint Josemaría Escrivá

October 6, 2002

BULLETIN Spring 2003



O God, through the mediation of Mary our Mother, you granted your priest Saint Josemaría countless graces, choosing him as a most faithful instrument to found Opus Dei, a way of sanctification in daily work and in the fulfillment of the Christian's ordinary duties. Grant that I too may learn to turn all the circumstances and events of my life into occasions of loving you and serving the Church, the Pope and all souls with joy and simplicity, lighting up the pathways of this earth with faith and love.

Deign to grant me, through the intercession of Saint Josemaría, the favor of... (make your request). Amen.

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

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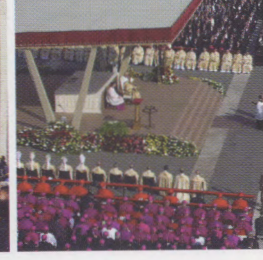
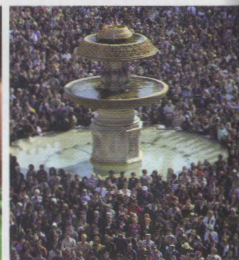
Days of prayer and thanksgiving

*When Saint Josemaría arrived in Rome for the first time on the evening of June 23, 1946, he moved into a small top floor apartment on the Plaza of Città Leonina, a short distance from St. Peter's Basilica. When night fell he went out onto the balcony, a small covered terrace that faced the Pope's residence. Deeply moved, he began to pray for Pope Pius XII. Surely he joined his prayer to that of so many Christians who throughout history have offered their life for the Pope, while also thinking of all those who would have wished, as he wrote in *The Way*, to make their pilgrimage *videre Petrum*, to see the Pope. The hours passed quickly; he was still on his knees when the sun rose. He had spent his first Roman night in a vigil of prayer.*

• In Rome

From early in the morning on the sixth of October, beneath the same windows of the Pontifical apartment, a closely packed crowd filled Saint Peter's Square, the Via della Conciliazione, and adjacent streets and plazas. All were praying for the Church and the Pope, who would soon begin the canonization of Josemaría Escrivá. Authorities estimated that between 450,000 and 500,000 people were present. For many, it was also their first trip to Rome, and, for some, probably their only trip.

Only a little over 50 years had gone by since that holy priest spent the night praying for the Pope and the Church. The Città Leonina apartment building still looks the same. And now a vast and diverse crowd was praying calmly and fervently for the same intention. The lesson is clear: the important thing is always the



unity of each person with God. The fruitfulness of prayer is incalculable, since He is the one who gives the increase.

Those present had begun arriving in Rome as early as the final days of September. They came by plane, by train, by bus, by car, by ship. Eight ships docked in the port of Civitavecchia within the course of a few hours. In many places the travelers were welcomed by young volunteers, ready to help them in whatever way they could.

On October 3, the sacred remains of the Founder of Opus Dei were transported from their normal place of repose to the Basilica of Saint Eugene, a spacious church capable of receiving the thousands who would come to pray to the new saint over the next few days.

On the evening of Friday, October 4, in the auditorium of Saint Cecilia on the Via della Conciliazione, a ceremony was held to officially introduce the Harambee 2002 project, one of the solidarity initiatives undertaken for the

centennial of Saint Josemaría and for his canonization. Artists from all over the world participated in an evening concert interspersed with testimonials about the new saint, and about the importance of education for the future of the African continent.

Among the saints

The canonization ceremony took place on October 6 at ten in the morning. Pope John Paul II solemnly proclaimed that "For the honor of the Blessed Trinity . . . we declare and define Blessed Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer a Saint, inscribe him in the catalogue of the saints and decree that he should be devoutly honored as such in the whole Church." The "Amen" voiced by the vast congregation put the final period to the formula of canonization, and a deeply felt applause rose from Saint Peter's Square all the way to Castello Sant'Angelo.

When the Mass ended, the Pope asked the Prelate of Opus Dei to accompany him as they made their way slowly in a car through the square and the Via della Conciliazione to greet those present. Dozens of small children

received the Pope's blessing and a kiss on their forehead.

On the morning of the seventh, the Holy Father received those in Rome for the canonization in an audience. John Paul II referred in his address to the unconditional attitude of service to all souls that the new saint had displayed "in his dedication to priestly ministry and in the magnanimity with which he pushed ahead so many works of evangelization and of human development to help the poorest." Bishop Javier Echevarría, the Prelate of Opus Dei, had just finished celebrating a Mass of thanksgiving in Saint Peter's Square.

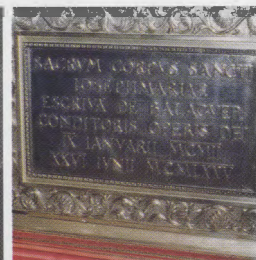
At the end of the audience, Patriarch Teoctist, the head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, officially greeted the Holy Father. With their warm and repeated applause, those present expressed the affection of so many Catholics from all over the world and their shared desire for unity.

In thanksgiving

On October 8 and 9, Masses of thanksgiving in eighteen different

languages were held in various basilicas and churches in Rome. The ceremonies connected with the canonization of Saint Josemaría ended on the evening of October 10 with the solemn transfer of his body from the Basilica of Saint Eugene back to the Prelatic Church of Our Lady of Peace.

Upon their return to their home countries, the participants took with them the words of the Pope on the example of Saint Josemaría: "Following in his footsteps, spread in society the consciousness that we are all called to holiness whatever our race, class, society or age. In the first place, struggle to be saints yourselves, cultivating an evangelical style of humility and service, abandonment to Providence and constant listening to the voice of the Spirit. In this way, you will be the "salt of the earth" (cf. Mt 5:13) and "your light will so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (ibid. 5:16). The Pope's words evoked the challenge *Duc in altum!*—set forth months earlier by John Paul II for the whole Church at the beginning of the new Millennium.





Raise the world to God and transform it from within

Homily of Pope John Paul II at the canonization ceremony of Josemaría Escrivá.

1 “All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (Rom 8:14). These words of the Apostle Paul, which we have just heard, help us understand better the significant message of today’s canonization of Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer. With docility he allowed himself to be led by the Spirit, convinced that only in this way can one fully accomplish God’s will.

This fundamental Christian truth was a constant theme in his preaching. Indeed, he never stopped inviting his spiritual children to invoke the Holy Spirit to ensure that their interior life, namely, their life of relationship with God and their family, professional and social life, totally made up of small earthly realities, would not be separated but would form one life that was “holy and full of God.” He wrote, “We find the invisible God in the most visible and material things” (*Conversations with Josemaría Escrivá*, no. 114).

This teaching of his is still timely and urgent today. In virtue of the Baptism that incorporates him into Christ, the believer is called to establish with the

Lord an uninterrupted and vital relationship. He is called to be holy and to collaborate in the salvation of humanity.

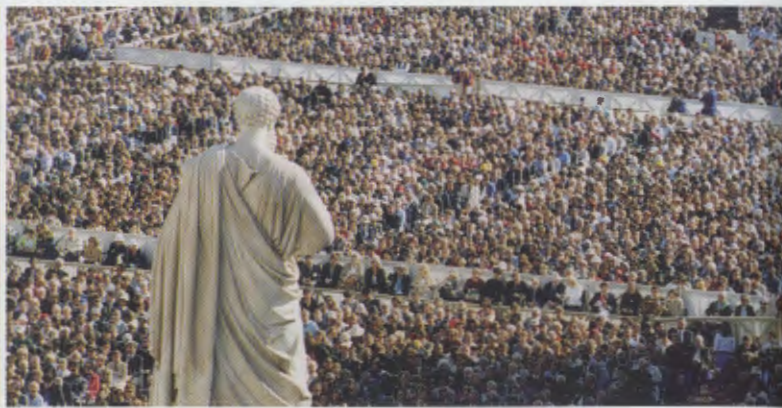
2 “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it” (Gen 2:15). The Book of Genesis, as we heard in the first reading, reminds us that the Creator has entrusted the earth to man, to “till” it and “keep” it. Believers acting in the various realities of this world contribute to realize this divine universal plan.

Work and any other activity, carried out with the help of grace, is converted into a means of daily sanctification.

“The ordinary life of a Christian who has faith,” Josemaría Escrivá used to say, “when he works or rests, when he prays or sleeps, at all times, is a life in which God is always present” (*Meditations*, March 3, 1954). This supernatural vision of life unfolds an extraordinarily rich horizon of salvific perspectives, because, even in the only apparently monotonous flow of normal earthly events, God comes

At 10:25 on the sunny morning of October 6, before several hundred thousand people from all over the world, John Paul II canonized Josemaría Escrivá

Communion was distributed by a thousand priests, each accompanied by a volunteer with a white umbrella



close to us and we can cooperate with his plan of salvation.

So it is easier to understand what the Second Vatican Council affirmed: "there is no question, then, of the Christian message inhibiting men from building up the world ... on the contrary it is an incentive to do these very things" (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 34).

3 To raise the world to God and transform it from within: this is the ideal the holy founder points out to you, dear brothers and sisters, who rejoice today to see him raised to the glory of the altars. He continues to remind you of the need not to let yourselves be frightened by a

materialist culture that threatens to dissolve the genuine identity of Christ's disciples. He liked to repeat forcefully that the Christian faith is opposed to conformism and interior inertia.

Following in his footsteps, spread in society the consciousness that we are all called to holiness whatever our race, class, society or age. In the first place, struggle to be saints yourselves, cultivating an evangelical style of humility and service, abandonment to Providence and of constant listening to the voice of the Spirit. In this way, you will be the "salt of the earth" (cf. Mt 5:13) and "your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (ibid., 5:16).

4 Those who want to serve the cause of the Gospel faithfully will certainly encounter misunderstandings and difficulties. The Lord purifies and shapes all those he calls to follow him with the mysterious power of the Cross; but "in the Cross," the new saint repeated, "we find light, peace and joy: Lux in Cruce, requies in Cruce, gaudium in Cruce!"

Ever since 7 August 1931 when, during the celebration of holy Mass, the words of Jesus echoed in his soul, "when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all to myself" (Jn 12:32), Josemaría Escrivá understood more clearly that the mission of the baptized consists in raising the Cross of Christ above all human reality and he felt burning within him the impassioned vocation

to evangelize every human setting. Then, without hesitation, he accepted Jesus' invitation to the Apostle Peter, which we just heard in this square: "Duc in altum!" (Put out into the deep). He transmitted it to his entire spiritual family so that they might offer the Church a valid contribution of communion and apostolic service. Today this invitation is extended to all of us: "Put out into the deep," the divine Teacher says to us, "and let down your nets for a catch" (Lk 5:4).

5 To fulfill such a rigorous mission, one needs constant interior growth nourished by prayer. St Josemaría was a master in the practice of prayer, which he considered to be an extraordinary "weapon" to redeem the



“ To elevate the world to God and transform it from within: this is the ideal the holy founder points out to you ”

world. He always recommended: “In the first place prayer; then expiation; in the third place, but very much in third place, action” (*The Way*, no. 82). It is not a paradox but a perennial truth: the fruitfulness of the apostolate lies above all in prayer and in intense and constant sacramental life. This, in

essence, is the secret of the holiness and the true success of the saints.

May the Lord help you, dear brothers and sisters, to accept this challenging ascetical and missionary instruction. May Mary sustain you, whom the holy founder invoked as “*Spes nostra, Sedes*

“ The mission of the baptized consists in raising Christ’s Cross above all human reality ”

Sapientiae, Ancilla Domini!” (Our Hope, Seat of Wisdom, Handmaid of the Lord).

May Our Lady make everyone an authentic witness of the Gospel, ready everywhere to make a generous contribution to building the Kingdom of Christ! May the example and

teaching of Saint Josemaría be an incentive to us so that at the end of the earthly pilgrimage, we too may be able to share in the blessed inheritance of heaven! There, together with the angels and all the saints, we will contemplate the face of God and sing his glory for all eternity.

Carry with you the teachings of the new saint

Homily of Bishop Javier Echevarría during the thanksgiving Mass for the canonization of Josemaría Escrivá. Most Reverend Javier Echevarría, Prelate of Opus Dei Rome, Saint Peter's Square, October 7, 2002

1 *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes* (Ps 116/117:1). Praise the Lord, all you nations. The invitation of the Responsorial Psalm, which resounded a few moments ago, constitutes an excellent summary of the sentiments that overflow from our hearts today: Deo omnis gloria! To God be all the glory! We want to adore the Thrice-Holy God and give Him thanks for the gift with which He has enriched the Church and the world: the canonization of Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, priest, and Founder of Opus Dei, carried out yesterday by our beloved Pope John Paul II.

Our gratitude is addressed also to the Holy Father himself, who has fulfilled the plans of the Blessed Trinity: while preparing ourselves to raise our prayers to heaven, we pray to the Lord for his person and intentions. We know that this prayer pleases Saint Josemaría, who loved the Vicar of Christ on earth with all his soul, to the point of never separating this love for

the pope from the love he professed for Jesus Christ and his Blessed Mother. From the very moment that our Lord burst into his soul with the first intimations of Opus Dei, of which, at the time, he had no notion, he began to pray and to work in order to make a reality the prayer that sprang forth from his heart: *Omnes cum Petro ad Iesum per Mariam!* All with Peter to Jesus through Mary.

All the participants in this Holy Mass, and the countless souls united with us in spirit throughout the world, recognize joyfully our debt to this new saint whom God has granted the Church. Many of us have obtained graces and favors of all sorts through his intercession. Not a few of us strive to follow in his footsteps of fidelity to the Lord, trying to reproduce in our souls the spirit that he incarnated. Saint Josemaría has shown all of us—by his example and his teachings—a clear way of traveling the road of the Christian vocation, which has sanctity



as its destination. For this reason, the canonization of the Founder of Opus Dei has the character of a feast—a feast of this great family of God, which is the Church. For all of this, we wish to give thanks to the Lord in this Eucharistic celebration.

“ If the 20th century has been the witness of the *rediscovery* of this universal call to holiness, . . . the century in which we are now living should be characterized by a more effective and extensive practice of this teaching ”

Saint Josemaría Escrivá, *Collect*)—the century in which we are now living should be characterized by a more effective and extensive practice of this teaching. This is one of the great challenges that the Holy Spirit has placed before the men and women of our time.

Saint Josemaría endeavored to awaken

this zeal for holiness in all souls. The fact that his canonization has taken place at the dawn of a new century is charged with meaning. His message resounds with special force in today's world: “We have come to say, with the humility of those who know themselves to be sinners and of little worth—*homo peccator sum* (Luke 5:8), we say with Peter—but with the faith of those who allow themselves to be guided by the hand of God, that sanctity is not something for a privileged few. The Lord calls all of us. He expects Love from all of us—from everyone, wherever they are; from everyone, whatever their state in life, their profession or job. For the daily life we live, apparently so ordinary, can be a path to sanctity: it is not necessary to abandon one's place in the world in order to search for God, if the Lord hasn't given a soul a vocation to the religious life, because all the paths of the earth can be the occasion for an encounter with Christ” (Letter, March 24, 1930, no. 2).

2 Nearly forty years have passed since the Second Vatican Council proclaimed the universal call to holiness and apostolate (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, Ch. V), but there is still a long road to travel before this truth can be said to illuminate and guide the steps of the men and women of this world. The Roman Pontiff has recalled this explicitly in his Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, in which he proposed this doctrine as “the foundation of the pastoral program that concerns us at the beginning of the new millennium” (*NMI* 31).

Everyone in the Church, every shepherd and all of the faithful, are called to commit themselves personally to the daily struggle for personal holiness and to participate, personally as well, in the fulfillment of the mission which Christ has given us. If the 20th century has been the witness of the “rediscovery” of this universal call to holiness—it was contained in the Gospel from the beginning, and Saint Josemaría was constituted its herald by the personal, divine vocation he received (cf. Mass of

3 In every moment—as the new saint was already saying in the 1930s (cf. *The Way*, no. 382)—one must look for Christ, find Him and love Him. Only if we strive daily to take these three steps will we arrive at full identification with Christ, becoming *alter Christus, ipse Christus*. “Perhaps you will say”—I address these words of Saint Josemaría to you now—“that you are still at the first step. Look for him, then, with hunger. If you make this effort, I can guarantee that you have already found him, and that you have begun to deal with him and love him, to hold your conversation in heaven” (cf. Phil 3:20) (*Friends of God*, no. 300).

We meet Jesus in prayer, in the Eucharist and in the other sacraments of the Church; but also in the faithful fulfillment of our family, professional and social duties. This is an arduous goal, which we only fully achieve when our earthly pilgrimage has finished. “But don't lose sight of the fact that saints aren't born: they are forged from the interplay of divine grace and human correspondence,” wrote Saint Josemaría in one of his homilies, adding: “That's why I tell you that, if you want to be a coherent Christian, you have to take great care of the little details, because the sanctity that our Lord demands of you is reached by carrying out your work with love for God, fulfilling your everyday obligations,

“ In every moment —as the new Saint was already saying in the 1930s— one must look for Christ, find Him and love Him ”

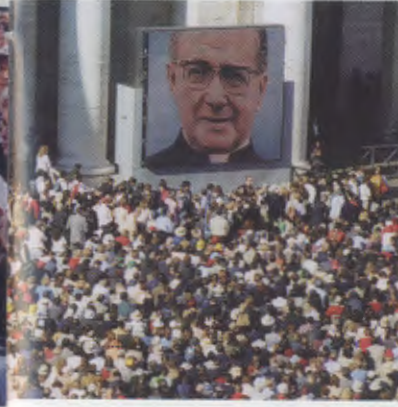
which are almost always made up of little things” (*Ibid.*, no. 7).

Sanctify your work. Sanctify yourself in your work. Sanctify others through your work. With these pithy phrases, the Founder of Opus Dei summed up the nucleus of the message that God had entrusted to him, in order to remind Christians of it. The effort to reach sanctity is inseparably united to the sanctification of one's own work—carried out with human perfection and rectitude of intention, with a spirit of service—and to the sanctification of others. If one wants to follow the Lord, it is not possible to neglect one's brothers and sisters, with their spiritual and material needs. “Our vocation as children of God, in the middle of the world, demands that we not seek our own personal sanctity alone, but rather that we travel along the pathways of the world, converting them into roads which, while passing through obstacles, lead other souls to the Lord; that we take part as ordinary citizens in all temporal activities, in order to be leaven (cf. Mt 13:33) which must cause the whole mass to rise (cf. 1 Cor 5:6)” (*Christ Is Passing By*, no. 120).

4 Divine providence arranged that the earthly life of Saint Josemaría should take place in the 20th century, a time that has seen enormous developments in science and technology, which have not always,

People from all over
the world gathered
in Saint Peter's Square

Men and women,
healthy and sick,
rich and poor,
young and old...
a universal message



unfortunately, been used for mankind's benefit. It is necessary to recognize that, alongside admirable achievements of the human spirit, there abound in our times torrents of bitter water, which attempt in vain to quench the thirst for happiness in human hearts. Nevertheless, it is certain—as Bishop Alvaro del Portillo wrote—that, with the message of the new Saint, “all the professions, all the classes, all honest social settings have been moved by the Angels of God, like those waters in the Probatic pool that the Gospel speaks of (cf. Jn 5:2 ff), and have acquired healing strength” (Pastoral letter, September 30, 1975, no. 20).

Recalling Don Alvaro, the first successor of our Father, we feel his

spiritual presence very keenly in these moments. With him, we can affirm, full of gratitude to God, that thanks to the teaching and spirit of the Founder of Opus Dei, “even from the driest and most unlikely stones have gushed torrents of medicinal water. Human work well done has become a cleansing liquid for the eyes, allowing one to discover God in all the circumstances of life, in all things. And this has occurred precisely in our times, when materialism strives to transform work into a mud that blinds men, and prevents them from looking at God” (Ibid.).

I would like to greet all those who have come to Rome from English-speaking countries to attend the canonization of Saint Josemaría

Escrivá. When you return home, bring back with you the teachings of the new saint and try to put them into practice. Ask Saint Josemaría to teach you to convert the prose of each day—your most ordinary occupations—into poetry, into heroic verse: into desires and deeds of holiness and apostolate.

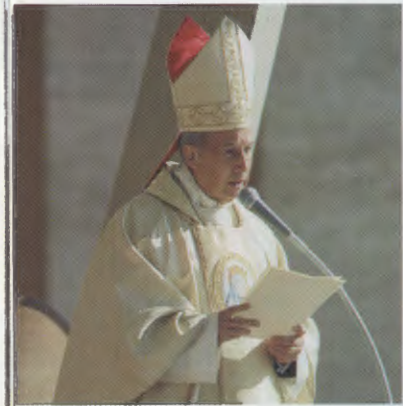
I would remind those of you who come from French-speaking countries of the importance of collaborating in the apostolic mission of the Church, which is a duty of every Christian, endeavoring to impregnate arts and letters, science and technology, with the spirit of the Gospels. Seek the intercession of Saint Josemaría, putting into practice that ideal which God Himself engraved in his soul: placing

Christ—through our work, whatever it may be—at the summit of all human activities.

Today the Church venerates the Blessed Virgin with the title of Our Lady of the Rosary. It gives me great joy to think that the canonization of our Father should have taken place on the eve of a feast of Holy Mary; this coincidence is one more sign of her affectionate motherly care. Let us have recourse to her maternal mediation, full of confidence, as we renew our thanksgiving to the Lord for this canonization. *Deo omnis gloria!* I say once again, as we ask that this desire for personal holiness and apostolate spread with ever greater force among all Christians.

The joy and gratitude of thousands of people

“ The canonization of Josemaría Escrivá is a gift for the whole world ”



Words of greeting to the Holy Father
At the audience for the canonization of Josemaría Escrivá
Most Reverend Javier Echevarría, Prelate of Opus Dei
Rome, October 7, 2002

Holy Father,
Ten years ago, in this very Square, my predecessor as Prelate of Opus Dei, Bishop Alvaro del Portillo, addressed to Your Holiness heartfelt words of gratitude after the beatification of Josemaría Escrivá. Today, it is my turn and my unmerited honor to express the joy and gratitude of the thousands of faithful and cooperators of the Prelature, and of the countless souls devoted to St. Josemaría Escrivá who, both in Rome and outside of Rome, have participated with jubilation in the

canonization ceremony. Thank you, Holy Father.

The solemn recognition of the sanctity of this good and faithful servant, whom God Our Lord chose as a herald of the universal call to holiness and apostolate in the ordinary circumstances of life, is an invitation to all Catholics to meet God in the fulfillment of their own family, professional and social duties.

The canonization of Josemaría Escrivá is, without doubt, a gift for the whole

“ We will always need intercessors before the throne of God ”

world, because we will always be in need of intercessors before the throne of God. It also provides a new reason for confidence among the lay faithful, who see reaffirmed once more their high calling as God's children in Jesus Christ, called to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (cf. Mt 5:48), in the ordinary circumstances of life. As Your Holiness wrote in the Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*: “Now is the time to propose once again to all, with conviction, this ‘high standard’ of the ordinary

Christian life” (NMI 31). St. Josemaría Escrivá was ahead of his time, reminding us of the universal call to holiness and apostolate which the Second Vatican Council was to proclaim with such force. He not only spread this teaching throughout the world, reinforced by the example of his cheerful and persevering ascetical struggle, but also opened up within the Church, by God's will, a way of sanctification “as old and as new as the Gospels,” another eloquent sign of God's mercy toward men and an

Volunteers were a key part of the organization: "The sixth happened to be my birthday," one of them said, "and while it was one of the most exhausting days of my life, it was also the happiest"

The faithful came from 84 countries: one third were Italians, one third came from the rest of Europe and the other third came from the rest of the world



efficacious instrument in the service of the Church's salvific mission.

Millions of people, Holy Father, are rejoicing today all over the world, both within and without the visible walls of the Church. Indeed, many non-Catholics and non-Christians admire Josemaría Escrivá and have recourse to his teachings as a source of inspiration for their own conduct and for their professional and social activity. These people too have received encouragement in their efforts to improve our world, beset by injustice and, at the same time, hungry for understanding and peace.

In the ten years that have passed since the

beatification of Josemaría Escrivá, the apostolic activity of the faithful and cooperators of the Prelature of Opus Dei has grown in intensity and extension in many countries. Sustained by the grace of God, their activities on behalf of all souls, especially the neediest, have multiplied. On the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of St. Josemaría Escrivá, dozens of initiatives for personal and

professional formation have begun in developing countries and in the poorer parts of large cities. These activities bear witness that the search for personal holiness—the union of the soul

“The lay faithful see their high calling as God's children reaffirmed once more”

with God—is inseparable from the concern—shown with deeds—for the material and spiritual welfare of our brothers and sisters.

Before ending, I want to assure Your Holiness of the fervent prayers for the Holy Father and his intentions which the faithful and cooperators of Opus Dei throughout the world are continually raising to heaven. I entrust these prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom we honor especially today with the title of Our Lady of the Rosary. Enriched by her maternal intercession before Jesus, these prayers will assist Your Holiness

“Indeed many non-Catholics and non-Christians admire Josemaría Escrivá and have recourse to his teachings”

in the joyous fulfillment of the mission of Supreme Pastor.

Holy Father, permit me to thank you once again, with all my heart. As we prepare to receive and

meditate upon your words, and to congratulate you, in the name of all, on the upcoming anniversary of your election as Peter's Successor, I ask of you—on behalf of the faithful and cooperators of the Prelature of Opus Dei, and the countless souls devoted to St. Josemaría, and for myself—the strengthening grace of your Apostolic Blessing.



Saint Josemaría: the saint of the ordinary

At the end of the Mass of thanksgiving for the canonization of the Founder of Opus Dei, Pope John Paul II granted an audience to the participants. Here is the text of the Roman Pontiff's address.

My dear brothers and sisters:

1 I am happy to greet you cordially, the day after the canonization of the Bl. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer. I thank Archbishop Javier Echevarría, Prelate of Opus Dei, for his expression of gratitude on your behalf. With affection I greet the many Cardinals, Bishops and priests

who have wanted to take part in this celebration.

This festive gathering brings together a great variety of faithful from many countries belonging to very different social and cultural backgrounds: priests and lay people, men and women, young and old, intellectuals and blue collar workers.

This is a sign of the apostolic zeal that burned in the soul of St. Josemaría.

2 In the Founder of Opus Dei, there is an extraordinary love for the will of God. There exists a sure criterion of holiness: fidelity in accomplishing the divine will down to the last consequences. For each of us the Lord has a plan, to each he entrusts a mission on earth. The saint could not even conceive of himself outside of God's plan. He lived only to achieve it.

St. Josemaría was chosen by the Lord to announce the universal call to holiness and to point out that daily life and ordinary activities are a path to holiness. One could say that he was the saint of ordinary life. In fact, he was convinced that for those who live with a perspective of faith, everything is an

opportunity to meet God, everything can be an incentive for prayer. Seen in this light, daily life reveals an unexpected greatness. Holiness is truly within everyone's reach.

3 St. Escrivá was a very human saint. All those who met him, whatever their culture or social status, felt he was a father, totally devoted to serving others, for he was convinced that every soul is a marvellous treasure; indeed, every person is worth all of Christ's Blood. This attitude of service is obvious in his dedication to his priestly ministry and in the magnanimity with which he launched so many works of evangelization and human advancement for the poorest persons.

The Lord gave him a profound under-

At the end of the audience for participants, the Pope received Patriarch Teoctist in St. Peter's Square



standing of the gift of our divine sonship. He taught him to contemplate the tender face of a Father in the God who speaks to us through the most varied events of life. A Father who loves us, who follows us step by step, who protects us, understands us and awaits from each of us a response of love. The consideration of this fatherly presence which accompanies the Christian everywhere gives him steadfast confidence; he must trust in the heavenly Father at every moment. He should never feel lonely or frightened. When the Cross appears, he should not see it as a punishment, but a mission entrusted by the Lord himself. The Christian is necessarily optimistic, because he knows he is a son of God in Christ.

4 St. Josemaría was profoundly convinced that the Christian life entails a mission

and an apostolate: we are in the world to save it with Christ. He loved the world passionately, with a "redemptive love" (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 604). Precisely for this reason his teachings have helped so many ordinary members of the faithful to discover the redemptive power of faith, its capacity to transform the earth.

This is a message that has abundant and fruitful implications for the evangelizing mission of the Church. It fosters the Christianization of the world "from within," showing there can be no conflict between divine law and the demands of genuine human progress. This saintly priest taught that Christ must be the apex of all human activity (cf. Jn 12:32).

His message impels the Christian to act in places where the future of society is being shaped. From the laity's active

"And many children... including new-borns," the Pope joked



presence in all the professions and at the most advanced frontiers of development, there can only come a positive contribution to the strengthening of that harmony between faith and culture which is one of the greatest needs of our time.

5 St. Josemaría Escrivá spent his life for the service of the Church. In his writings, priests and lay people, men and women religious who follow the most varied paths, find a stimulating source of inspiration. Dear brothers and sisters, in imitating him with openness of spirit and heart, with a readiness to serve the local Churches, you contribute to strengthening the "spirituality of communion" which my Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* points out as one of the most important goals of our time (cf. nos. 42-45).

I welcome the chance to mention today's liturgical feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. St. Josemaría wrote a beautiful small book called *Holy Rosary*, which presents spiritual childhood, a real disposition of spirit of those who wish to attain total abandonment to the divine will. I heartily entrust all of you, with your families and your apostolate, to the motherly protection of Mary and I thank you for your presence.

6 I once again thank everyone present, especially those who have come from afar. Dear brothers and sisters, I invite you to take a visible witness of faith everywhere, in accord with the example and teaching of your holy Founder. I accompany you with my prayer and I warmly bless you, your families and your activities.

Seeing the divine manifested in the human



Homily at the Mass of Thanksgiving for the canonization of Saint Josemaría Escrivá
Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz, Vicar General of Opus Dei
Basilica of Saint Eugene, Rome, October 10, 2002

1 The narration of the first miraculous catch of fish, which we have just read in the Gospel of the Mass, culminates with the call of Peter and his companions to leave everything and follow Christ (See Lk 5:10). Saint Josemaría often contemplated this scene, noting among other things that our Lord comes to meet us in the midst of the ordinary circumstances of our life, and especially in our work. In a homily addressed to people of various trades and professions he said: “Your human vocation is a part—and an important

part—of your divine vocation. That is the reason you must strive for holiness, contributing at the same time to the sanctification of others, precisely by sanctifying your work and your environment” (Saint Josemaría Escrivá, *Christ Is Passing By*, no. 46).

This positive vision of the world, and particularly of work, which the founder of Opus Dei spread everywhere, was rooted in a conviction of the original goodness of creation (see Gen 1:31). Meditating on this reality, he fixed his attention especially on the words from

the Book of Genesis found in the first reading of the Mass: God put man in the garden of Eden “to till it and keep it” (Gen 2:15). He placed him in charge of the earth and made him master of material creatures, to complete, in a sense, the work of creation (See Gen 1:27-28).

However, this doesn’t mean closing our eyes to reality, or underestimating the presence of sin in the world. “Good and evil,” Saint Josemaría pointed out, “are mixed in human history, and therefore the Christian should be a man of judgment. But this judgment should never bring him to deny the goodness of God’s works. On the contrary it should bring him to recognize God’s hand working through all human actions, even those which betray our fallen nature” (*Conversations*, no. 70).

2 The new saint also insisted that we should be filled with admiration and gratitude when we contemplate the incarnation of the Son of God: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him” (Jn 3:16-17). If we love God how can we fail to love the world? Let us listen to some other well-known words of Saint Josemaría: “This world of ours . . . is good, for so it came from God’s hands. It was Adam’s sin, the sin of human pride, which broke the divine harmony of creation. But God the Father, in the fullness of time, sent his only-

begotten Son to take flesh in Mary ever Virgin, through the Holy Spirit, and re-establish peace. In this way, by redeeming man from sin, *adoptionem filiorum recipemus* (Gal 4:5), we receive adoption as sons. We become capable of sharing the intimacy of God. In this way the new man, the new line of the children of God (see Rom 6:4-5), is enabled to free the whole universe from disorder, restoring all things in Christ (see Eph 1:9-10), as they have been reconciled with God (see Col 1:20)” (Saint Josemaría Escrivá, *Christ Is Passing By*, no. 183).

Our divine filiation does not consist only in the fact (which by itself would be marvelous) that God wants us to deal with him with the trusting intimacy of a child with its father. The Holy Spirit really unites us, identifies us, with God the Son, with Christ; and in Him, as members of his Body, we are truly sons and daughters of God the Father (see John Paul II, *Encyclical Dominum et Vivificantem*, no. 52). “We can never exhaust such an immense wonder, nor be sufficiently grateful to our God for having deigned to let us share in the divine life of the Holy Trinity by making us ‘sons in the Son.’ Already here on earth, God wants us to form part of his flock: the Church ‘gathered together in the unity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’ (St. Cyprian, *De oratione*

“ We should feel ourselves urged to collaborate with Christ in the salvation of all mankind ”

dominica, 23). That is how we should always regard the Church, working intensely to foster and deepen the fraternity that unites all the members of

Christ’s Mystical Body, seeing everything relating to the Church as very much our own concern” (A. del Portillo, *Pastoral Letter*, Aug. 1, 1991).

3 Let us take very seriously the Christian vocation to intimacy with God, to sanctity, seeing it for what it truly is: God’s will for each of us, each called by our name. How Saint Josemaría liked to savor those words of Sacred Scripture: “I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine” (Is 43:1). (See Saint Josemaría Escrivá, *Christ Is Passing By*, no. 59; *Friends of God*, no. 312; *The Forge*, no. 12). This is God’s will for us, as Saint Paul tells us: “This is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess 4:3). Thus sanctity is not only a goal towards which we should strive, but above all a goal that God himself has sought to make possible for us. Therefore, there is no room for discouragement in the face of our personal weakness, because we always have God’s strength to assist us if we go assiduously to the throne of grace: to the Eucharist, to penance, to prayer. And with this “fortitude on loan” (Saint Josemaría, *The Way*, no. 728), we are enabled to sanctify our work and our rest, our family life and social relations, our health and sickness. That is to say, we can overcome our limita-

tions and miseries, and advance on the path that, through the action of the Holy Spirit, leads to definitive identification with Jesus Christ “in the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom 8:21).

Let us absorb these teachings more deeply, striving to make them the foundation for our thoughts and the guideline for our daily behavior. And let us strive to spread them among our relatives, friends and colleagues at work, with a constant personal apostolate, because we should feel ourselves urged to collaborate with Christ in the salvation of all mankind. How marvelous it is to be, as Saint Paul says, “God’s fellow workers.”

4 How high is the goal to which we are all called! To be saints, to reach the fullness of divine filiation. However, as Saint Josemaría has shown us by his example and words, to attain this high goal there is no need to do extraordinary things. The only thing necessary is to love God and our fellow men and women in the fulfillment of our ordinary duties, with the strength that our Lord himself gives us in the sacraments and in prayer.

The canonization of Saint Josemaría has been a great joy for us, but it should also be the stimulus for a more decisive and generous response to our Christian vocation. May each of us learn how to find and love God—and to serve Him in our

“ Sanctity is not only a goal towards which we should strive, but above all a goal that God himself has sought to make possible for us ”

neighbor—in the midst of ordinary life: in the family, at work, and in all our social dealings. Let us ask the new saint that we may respond ever more deeply—each day—to the Lord’s call.

At this beginning of the third Millennium, John Paul II invites us “to share the enthusiasm of the very first Christians: we can count on the power of the same Spirit who was poured out at Pentecost and who impels us still today to start out anew, sustained by the hope ‘which does not disappoint’ (Rom 5:5)” (John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 58). Thus we will fulfill the aspiration that, already in those far off years of the thirties, Saint Josemaría spoke of as the goal of all of his efforts: “To get to know Jesus Christ, to make Him known, to bring Him everywhere.”

May this also be the summary of our life: we ask God for this through the intercession of our Lady and the new saint. May this program be carried out faithfully by all Christians, and particularly the faithful of Opus Dei—in spite of our personal weakness—closely united to our Prelate and Father, under the guidance of the Roman Pon-

tiff, and therefore closely united to the whole Church. As our Father so liked to pray: “*omnes cum Petro ad Iesum per Mariam!* All, with Peter to Jesus through Mary!” (St. Josemaría Escrivá, *Christ Is Passing By*, no. 139). Amen.



Ordinary life is a training ground for attaining sanctity

Homily at the last Mass of thanksgiving for the canonization of Josemaría Escrivá

Most Reverend Javier Echevarría, Prelate of Opus Dei
Basilica of Saint Eugene, Rome, October 10, 2002

1 These unforgettable days of the canonization of St. Josemaría Escrivá are about to come to an end. In a few moments, his venerable remains will be placed once again in the Prelatic Church of Our Lady of Peace, after

having been present for the veneration of the faithful for eight days in this Basilica of Sant'Eugenio. Immediately after that, the "diaspora" will begin—for many, it began right after the canonization—and we will all return

to our usual activities: ordinary life, the training ground, as it were, for attaining holiness.

Let us ask ourselves: What resolution can I draw from these days spent in Rome, in which I have experienced the marvelous universality of the Church and of this "little part" of the Church, Opus Dei? What should my life be like, from now on? What words of St. Josemaría can I bring back to those who were not able to attend the canonization, even though they have certainly been present spiritually during these days?

If I myself were speaking with them, I would remind them of something

that my beloved predecessor Don Alvaro said ten years ago in one of the last thanksgiving Masses for the beatification of our Father. He said—and I make his words my own—that there had begun "a new stage in the life of Opus Dei..., in the life of each of its members. A time of more profound love for God, of more constant apostolic effort, of more generous service to the Church and all mankind. An epoch, in short, of greater fidelity to the spirit of sanctification in the middle of the world which our Founder left us as his testament" (Homily for Thanksgiving Mass for the Beatification of Josemaría Escrivá, May

21, 1992). In other words: a time in which to seek daily personal conversion.

I would like to comment briefly on these three points. May the Lord engrave them in our hearts and help us to put them into practice.

2 "A more profound love for God." For several months now, as a way of preparing for the canonization, we have struggled to be converted on a daily basis. How many times we have prayed for God's grace through the intercession of St. Josemaría Escrivá! We know well that the path of holiness consists of many steps and stages. Conversion consists not merely in embracing the true faith, nor in rejecting sin in order to allow grace to work in our souls. Certainly, dwelling in habitual friendship with God is indispensable if we are to become intimate with Him. But this is not enough. We must grow—as our Father did—in this intimacy, progressively identifying ourselves with Christ, until the moment comes when each of us can exclaim with St. Paul: "vivo autem, iam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus" (Gal 2:20), I live now not I, but Christ lives in me, because I try to follow faithfully, in every moment of the day, the footprints which the Lord left on this earth. "Never be content with what you are," St. Augustine reminds us, "if you want to become what you, as yet, are not. For wherever you feel satisfied, there you will stop. If you

“ The resolution to love God more, must be translated into a more constant apostolic effort ”

forward every day, collaborating with the Holy Spirit in the work of our sanctification. This is achieved by dint of one conversion after another, perhaps in very small points—conversions which are like the concrete and progressive steps of the soul in its journey toward God. It is fitting, then, that, as a consequence of these days, we should renew in the depths of our souls the desire to practice the teachings of the one whom the Lord constituted—by making him see Opus Dei—a herald and teacher of the universal call to holiness and apostolate in the circumstances of ordinary life. Let us ask God the Father, through the intercession of this holy priest, as the Church invites us in the Collect of the Mass, to grant that, "carrying out our daily work in the Spirit of Christ, we may be formed in the likeness of your Son" (Mass of St. Josemaría Escrivá, Collect). We ask you, Lord, that all Christians may deepen their awareness of their divine filiation, with the same eagerness and efficacy with which St. Josemaría did, responding faithfully to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

Although each one of us amounts to very little, our hope is sure: God our Father is determined to lead us to the perfection of charity in Christ by

say, 'Enough', you have perished. Always grow, always go forward, always advance" (Sermon 169, 18).

In our pilgrimage toward heaven, struggle is necessary to go

means of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, "those who are guided by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you have not received a spirit of bondage to be once more in fear, but rather you have received a Spirit of sons by adoption, by which we cry out: 'Abba! Father!' For the Spirit Himself bears witness along with our spirit that we are God's children. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, provided that we suffer with Him, in order that we be glorified with Him as well" (Rom 8:14-17).

3 The resolution to love God more, to identify ourselves more fully with Jesus Christ, to respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, must be translated into "a more constant apostolic effort," as the liturgy urges us, inviting us to ask that, "in union with the Blessed Virgin Mary, we might serve the work of Redemption with an ardent love" (Mass of St. Josemaría Escrivá, Collect).

You are about to return to your countries, your homes, your jobs. Do so determined to be the instruments that the Lord wants to use to spread his word and his grace throughout the world. Take a glance around you. Look at the professional, social and familial circles in which you move, and you will discover many people—sons and daughters of God—who do not fully appreciate the high dignity to which Baptism has raised

“ We can count on the powerful help of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, the Guardian Angels, St. Josemaría, and all of God's saints ”

them, or the great vocation by which the Lord calls them to share in his very Life. Perhaps nobody has spoken to them about God or communicated to them, in a convincing way, the news that they are destined to Happiness with a capital H, to the eternal happiness to which all human beings aspire and which the things of this world cannot provide.

We must awaken them from their slumber, opening their eyes with the eloquence of our lives and the enthusiasm of our words, and thus lead them toward Jesus. We can count on the powerful help of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, the Guardian Angels, St. Josemaría and all of God's saints. We are not better than the others, but the Lord, in his infinite Love, has sought us out and invites us go out to the highways and byways and crossroads of the world to meet our brothers and sisters, the men and women all around us.

We will witness once again the miracle which the Gospel recounts today, when the Apostles, faithful to the command of Christ, "caught a great draught of fishes, so many that the nets began to break" (Luke 5:6). As the Founder of Opus Dei said, we too, "recalling our wretchedness, remembering countless failures caused by our pride, before the majesty of God, before Christ the

Between the 8th and 10th of October, 29 Masses of thanksgiving were celebrated in Rome in 17 different languages

At the end of the Mass, the relics of Saint Josemaría returned to their resting place, in the Prelatic Church of Our Lady of Peace, at Viale Bruno Buozzi 75



Fisherman, must confess with Saint Peter: Lord, I am a poor sinner" (cf. Lk 5:8). And then, Christ will say to you and to me, as he did to Saint Peter: 'henceforth you will be a fisher of men' (Lk 5:10), by divine command, on a divine mission, with divine efficacy" (Notes taken in a meditation, November 3, 1955).

4 Our effort to be saints and apostles has only one end: the glory of God, the salvation of souls: "a more generous service to the Church and all humanity," as Don Alvaro said ten years ago. But let us not forget that we will not know how to serve all those who await us, if we are not striving every day to take care of those we live with. During his earthly life, St. Josemaría Escrivá had no

other goal than to serve God, the Church, the Roman Pontiff and all souls. He followed the example of the Master, who "came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28). This holy priest truly loved souls, showing a refined charity for the people around him.

Being a servant of all, our Father rejoiced especially in offering filial service to the Church and the Pope. "Always consider," he wrote, "that after God and our Mother the Blessed Virgin, in the hierarchy of love and authority, comes the Pope. That's why I often say: 'Thank you, my God, for the love for the Pope that you have placed in my heart'" (Letter, January 9, 1932, no. 20).

Let us try to imitate this love and veneration for the Pope. His dignity as Vicar of Christ, as "the sweet Christ on earth," is a more than sufficient reason for us to feel wholeheartedly united to the Roman Pontiff, as a consequence of a genuine filial obligation. But, in addition, it is natural that we should want to show our gratitude to John Paul II, for having been God's instrument for the canonization of our Founder, and that we should offer for his person and intentions intense prayers, generous mortifications and our daily work carried out with human and supernatural perfection.

Keep the Pope in mind—I tell you now with words of our Father—especially "when the difficulties of your work

remind you that you are serving, because to serve for Love is a delight, which fills the soul with peace, even in the face of troubles" (Letter, May 31, 1943, no. 11). If we follow these suggestions, we will travel with confidence and "joy the path of our vocation" (Mass of St. Josemaría Escrivá, Prayer after Communion).

Let us entrust these resolutions to the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the Church. She, along with her spouse, St. Joseph, whom we venerate with such affection, the Guardian Angels, all the saints, and, especially, St. Josemaría Escrivá, will present our hearts' desires before the Blessed Trinity, and God will receive them lovingly, confirm them and grant us the grace to faithfully fulfill them.