

current lifestyle would turn it into something "old," without the capacity of being salt and light for all peoples. This is the great Christian adventure: to courageously maintain its original newness throughout the centuries. Jesus is and will always be what is permanent, and man will always turn his eyes towards Him when seeking a true and just social and personal order.

10. *In the course of your visit, you reminded Uruguayans of Pope John Paul II's reference to the Catholic roots of our country and the need to make the Christian viewpoint a reality in our society. Doesn't this message clash with a society profoundly marked by a secular tradition?*

The secular tradition of Uruguay that you refer to is well known, but clearly the Christian roots of this country are much older and deeper. I have seen evidence during my trip that, thank God, these roots have remained alive and active, and that a generation is arising that recognizes its identity in these Christian roots. And I have also seen the fruit that these Christian roots are producing.

11. *During your visit to Uruguay, we know that you had a chance to speak with people from all strata of society, with many different occupations. Uruguayans have the reputation of being friendly and respectful but also somewhat distant in regard to religious themes. Did you find Uruguayans concerned about their spiritual life, or do you feel that they relegate it to a "secondary level" in their lives?*

I don't know if all Uruguayans are like this, but those that I spoke with, people of all social classes, live their faith very well and act in accord with it,

or at least they are sincerely searching for God. If there are also Uruguayans whose faith has become lethargic or passive, I encourage them to learn from those who are seeking God with their whole heart. I am sure that, if they truly seek him, they will find him. Their life will acquire a transcendent meaning. Though seemingly the same as before, it will take on a very distinct savor and focus. They will find themselves more optimistic and enterprising, with greater interest in their family, their country and the world. I have learned a lot from the people I have seen here.

## *Avvenire* (Milan) February 1, 1998

*"The Redemption of Europe by Christian Culture," an interview published in the newspaper Avvenire, of Milan, Italy.*

1. *Why is an honorary doctorate being given to Cardinal Ratzinger?*

He is an eminent figure in the Church. The work that he carries out makes him a privileged witness of the theological progress that constantly enriches the life of the Church, and through her, the entire world. Nor can we forget, of course, his own impressive theological output, which I won't go into here.

2. *A pharmacologist, an economist and a cardinal-theologian simultaneously receive an honorary doctorate from one of the most prestigious Catholic universities in the world. Does this fact have any significance?*

It highlights anew that all the human sciences are at the service of the truth. The marvelous beauty with which the Creator has enriched the world should be the constant subject of honest and true scientific investigation, as Blessed Josemaría Escrivá noted on a similar occasion.

3. *How can institutions like the University of Navarre contribute to the birth of a new Europe?*

The University of Navarre is a place where intellectual work is carried out with the greatest possible rigor, fostering a university spirit that tries to stress the common roots of European civilization. This will certainly contribute to furthering the challenge that our Holy Father has addressed to the Christians on our continent: the re-evangelization of Europe. We all hope that the new Europe that is being born will be Christian, at least in the principal values that inspire it.

4. *What do you see as the cultural task of the Church in Italy, and how can Opus Dei contribute to its realization?*

I think that the Church in Italy has drawn up a very ambitious and attractive pastoral program. Neither the grace of God nor the effort of all Italian Catholics will be lacking in carrying it to a successful conclusion. For some time I have been praying and asking others to pray for this. All the faithful of the Prelature of Opus Dei will make an effort, as always, to follow the directives of the bishops and to foster Christian life in the most varied sectors of civil society where they work professionally like any other citizen.

## *Il Tempo* (Rome) April 12, 1998

*"The Christian can't passively await the end of history," an article published on Easter Sunday in the Roman newspaper Il Tempo.*

"I have risen: I am with you once more." So begins the Mass of Easter Sunday. Christ assures us that his victory over death is the guarantee and promise of a profound renewal for every Christian's life and for the entire world. Jesus Christ is alive, and he is with us forever. A superficial look at the world and at the constant wounds afflicting it seems to undermine the confidence of believers in Jesus' perennial presence in history. Nevertheless, as St. Paul assures us, the resurrection gives us a firm foundation for our faith (cf 1 Cor 15:16-17). Therefore no tragedy, whether in one's own life or in the course of history, can render Christian hope illusory.

Easter transforms our vision of our own life and of the history of the world. For 2,000 years Christians have believed that Christ has defeated sin and death. For 2,000 years they have obstinately cultivated the certainty that evil is a transitory phase in mankind's history. And for those 2,000 years daily experience seems to belie their belief. Many people, even in countries with a long Christian tradition, see faith as a childhood fancy. When one matures and confronts life, they say, one's eyes are opened to the reality of evil.