

BULLETIN ON THE LIFE OF MSGR. ESCRIVÁ
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The Servant of God
JOSEMARÍA ESCRIVÁ
Founder of Opus Dei

BULLETIN No. 6, NEW YORK

Monsignor Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer was born on January 9, 1902 in Barbastro, Spain. His schooling took place in Barbastro and Logroño. He carried out his ecclesiastical studies in the Pontifical University of Saragossa, where he received his licentiate in sacred theology. Later, in Rome, he earned the corresponding doctor's degree.

He also studied civil law in the University of Saragossa, and later obtained his doctorate at the University of Madrid. In 1960 he was awarded an honorary doctorate in philosophy and letters by the University of Saragossa. He was the first chancellor of the Universities of Navarre, in Spain, and of Piura, in Peru.

Ordained to the priesthood on March 28, 1925, he began his pastoral work in rural parishes and, from 1927 on, worked among the poor and sick in the slums and hospitals of Madrid. Several years later he was appointed rector of the Royal Foundation of St. Elizabeth in Madrid, a position he held until 1946, when he moved to Rome.

He served as consultor to various pontifical commissions and congregations of the Holy See, as domestic prelate to the Holy Father and as a member of the Pontifical Roman Academy of Theology.

On October 2, 1928, in Madrid, he founded Opus Dei. This institution has opened up a way for the faithful to sanctify themselves in the world; in this way they become a leaven of intense Christian life in all environments. On February 14, 1930, Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer founded the Women's Branch of Opus Dei and on February 14, 1943, within Opus Dei, the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross. Opus Dei received the definitive approval of the Holy See on June 16, 1950. On November 28, 1982, as Msgr. Escrivá had wished, it was erected as a Personal Prelature, a juridical form that was introduced into the law of the Church by the Second Vatican Council.

For forty-seven years Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer guided and inspired the growth of Opus Dei with constant prayer and penance, exemplary virtue and loving dedication. His sons and daughters, as well as countless others in every walk of life, called him simply Father. As a result, when its Founder yielded up his soul to God, Opus Dei had spread throughout the world with over 60,000 members of 80 nationalities, serving the Church with the same veneration and complete union with the Pope and bishops that Msgr. Escrivá always lived and taught his children.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was the root and center of his interior life. His profound awareness of being a son of God moved him to seek complete identification with Jesus Christ in everything, to live a deep and tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, and to enjoy a constant and confident friendship with the holy guardian angels; it made him a sower of peace and joy along all the ways of the earth.

Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer had repeatedly offered his life for the Church and the Pope. Our Lord accepted this offering, and on June 26, 1975, in Rome, in the room where he worked, the Father surrendered his soul to God with the same holy simplicity that characterized his entire life.

His body rests in the crypt of Our Lady of Peace oratory at Viale Bruno Buozzi 75, Rome. There it is accompanied by the constant prayer and gratitude of his sons and daughters and countless others who have come closer to God through his example and teaching. The process of beatification and canonization of Msgr. Escrivá began in Rome on May 12, 1981.

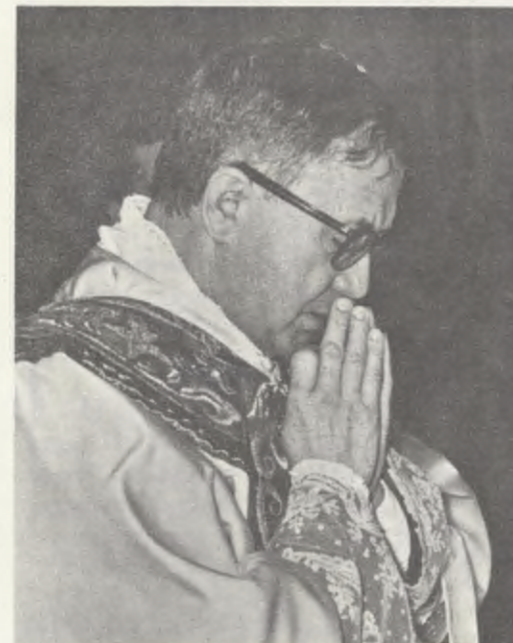
Cover: *Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer in a "get-together" in the conference center, Castellaudaura, in Barcelona, Spain, November 21, 1972.*

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Root and Center of Christian Life

Opus Dei's founder approached the holy Mass with a gigantic faith. He saw Jesus Christ's sacrifice of the cross renewed sacramentally in an unbloody way through the priest, as a profound reality to be lived. "It is Christ's sacrifice, offered to the Father in cooperation with the Holy Spirit: it is an offering of infinite value, which perpetuates the redemption in us." (1)

From his earliest days as a priest, when Opus Dei was beginning, the Servant of God spoke of Mass as "the center and root of interior life." The sacrifice of the altar is both the source and summit of Christian existence, since in that holocaust Christ himself, perfect God and perfect Man, offers himself to the Father for us and gives himself to us as food. "The holy Mass places before us the fundamental mysteries of our faith, because it is the Trinity's gift of itself to the Church. That is why the Mass is the center and root of the Christian's spiritual life. It is the goal of all the sacraments (cf. St. Thomas, *S.Th.*, III, q. 65, a. 3). The life of grace, initiated in us in Baptism and increased and strengthened in Confirmation, moves towards its fullness in us in the Mass." (2)



The Founder of Opus Dei during Holy Mass, March 21, 1964 in Rome.

Our union with God in Christ in the Mass includes all the expressions of love — adoration, petition, thanksgiving, reparation — and it advances them toward their fullness. "To live the holy Mass is to pray continually. It is to convince ourselves that, for each of us, the Mass is a personal encounter with God. We adore Him, we praise Him, we make our needs known to Him, we thank Him, we make up for our sins, we purify ourselves. Along with all other Christians we identify ourselves with Christ." (3)

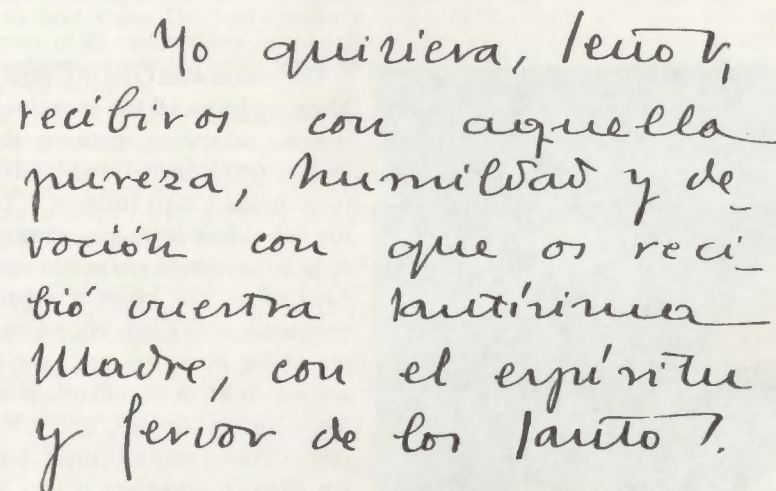
By identifying ourselves with Jesus Christ's surrender to the Father for the salvation of man, a Christian learns to share the redemptive cravings of the Son of God. Then there arise in the soul effective desires to serve one's neighbor and to offer one's life

and work, joys and sorrows, in union with Jesus' sacrifice. "This sacrifice encompasses everything that the Lord wants of us." (4) At this sacrifice the people of God gather together in Christ's love, and all of us Christians are **consummati in unum** (5): perfected in unity, forming a single body and soul with Christ in His holy Church.

The grandeur of this mystery of love requires us to approach the altar with purified souls, souls that have first been cleansed of sin in the sacrament of penance. The Holy Father, John Paul II, emphasized "the special demand of purity that the Eucharist makes." Referring to those "who might have mortal sin on their consciences," he reaffirms the unvarying teaching of the Church: "If they are to approach Eucharistic communion worthily, then they need to have recourse to the sacrament of reconciliation." (6)

NOTES

- (1) *Christ Is Passing By*, no. 86.
- (2) *Ibid.*, no. 87.
- (3) *Ibid.*, no. 88.
- (4) *Idem.*
- (5) Jn 17:23.
- (6) John Paul II, general audience, June 15, 1983.



Yo quisiera, Señor,
recibirlos con aquella
pureza, humildad y de-
voción con que os reci-
bió vuestra Santísima
Madre, con el espíritu
y fervor de los santos.

Text of the spiritual communion which the Servant of God learned while he was being prepared for first Holy Communion. He repeated it frequently all his life. It reads: "I wish, my Lord, to receive you, with the purity, humility and devotion with which your most holy mother received you, with the spirit and fervor of the saints."

Quotations from Monsignor Escrivá

It's love! There's no other explanation. How inadequate our words are to speak of Christ's love! He lowers Himself to the limit, shielding Himself from nothing, laying Himself open to everything — sacrileges, blasphemies, the coldness and indifference of so many. And why? So that He can offer, even if to but one person, the chance of discovering the beating of a heart that throbs in his wounded breast. (*A Priest Forever*, homily given on June 13, 1973).

The humility of Jesus: in Bethlehem, in Nazareth, on Calvary. But still more humiliation and more self-abasement in the most sacred host — more than in the stable, more than in Nazareth, more than on the cross.

That is why I must love the Mass so!...*Our* Mass, Jesus. (*The Way*, no. 533).

Our poor hearts are capable of treating the great gift of God to man as routine....To correspond to such great love, we must give ourselves completely, in body and in soul. We hear God, we talk to Him, we see Him, we taste Him. (*Christ Is Passing By*, no. 87).

My child, tell the Lord that from now on, whenever you celebrate or attend holy Mass, or you administer or receive the Eucharistic sacrament, you will do so with a great faith, with a burning love, as if it were the last time in your life. (*Registro Historico Fundador* 20133, p. 10).

A man who doesn't love the Mass doesn't love Christ. We must make an effort to *live* the Mass with calm and serenity, with devotion and affection... if we love Christ, who offers Himself for us, we will feel compelled to find a few minutes after Mass for an intimate personal thanksgiving, which will prolong in the silence of our hearts that other thanksgiving, which is the Eucharist. (*Christ Is Passing By*, no. 92).

My child, think now about the holy Mass. Think how we ought to celebrate it or attend it. Consider how the angels are present at it. Think how you are carrying out or participating in something that is divine. Look how on the altar Christ offers Himself up again for you and me. With this, you will feel a great desire to imitate His humility, His self-abasement, in the host; and you will overflow in thanksgiving, adoration, desires to make reparation, petition. And you will offer yourself, with your arms extended, as another Christ, **ipse Christus**, ready to be nailed to the sweet wood out of love for souls. (*Registro Historico Fundador* 20133, p. 11).

students would come to the Academy in even greater numbers. The Servant of God would cheerfully set aside his tiredness and readily tend to them. Since the Academy was short on space, at times he would turn his office over to others and install himself in the unused kitchen to hear confessions — so many in fact that he would jokingly liken the kitchen to a cathedral.

The Academy had been in operation only a few weeks when on January 5, 1934, the founder met with a number of people who were helping the apostolic venture, in order to discuss expansion. What he proposed to them was a larger setting for the Academy, one that would also serve as a student residence during the school year 1934-35. The project seemed crazy to one of the collaborators in view of the many difficulties they already faced. Wouldn't that be like jumping from a fifth floor window with an umbrella for a parachute? But the founder, in keeping with his apostolic motto, was prayerfully versed in the chasm that separates human projects from divine: "God and daring! Daring is not imprudence. Daring is not recklessness." (4)

Day after day he dedicated himself to the Catholic formation of students, whether at the Academy or elsewhere: days of recollection, visits to the poor and sick, catechism classes for children....From a letter he wrote to a young man who frequented DYA, we glean an outline of his message: "Now, what really counts: 1) prayer: in your first letter, with simplicity, tell me about your prayer. 2) Do you try to nail yourself to Christ's cross, each day a little, making yours a life of expiation? Don't despise little things: they're precisely what the Lord is asking of you. 3) Study. How many hours do you put in?" (5)

Fr. Josemaría's solicitude didn't come to a halt when the students scattered on their summer vacations. His apostolic encouragement took to the mails. From a letter he wrote in August, 1934: "Try not to let your life of piety go flat; above all, work on having lots of presence of God." Another: "Prayer: how happy you make me when you write that you are 'collecting' the prayers of young and old

alike. You've got my kind of stuff. May God bless you." (6)

In late September, 1934, he managed to rent three large apartments on Madrid's Ferraz Street (no. 50), two on the third floor as the living quarters for the residents, and another on the fourth floor to house the Academy. Thus, nine months after that January meeting at which his plan to move to larger quarters had been called folly, the founder could offer his followers this piece of supernatural advice, validated by his experience: "Don't let it bother you. The 'prudent' have always called the works of God madness. Onward! Be daring!" (7)

The DYA Academy-Residence opened its door in October, 1934. Fr. Josemaría shared the news with Fr. Francisco Moran, Vicar-General of the Madrid diocese: "The school year at DYA has begun, and I hope much supernatural fruit, of Catholic formation and culture, will come from this house. Mine is a certain hope because the foundation of our work is prayer and sacrifice. I can claim without exaggeration that these boys of ours are heroic. If you could only see how they pitch in — college teachers on all fours, engineers painting walls, lawyers, young doctors and students (the kind who study) filling in as carpenters — and how they kick in their savings to help this apostolate!" (8)

The Servant of God had also opened the door to not a few troubles. Unpaid bills kept piling up; finding residents was a slow and difficult chore; Fr. Josemaría himself had to do the housecleaning for long stretches....

The Servant of God drew interior strength from his conversation with Jesus in the tabernacle. He would spend long hours of the day and night in the chapel of the Academy-Residence. He had to overcome many obstacles to be able to set up that chapel, and had finally said the first Mass there on March 31, 1935. This was Opus Dei's first tabernacle, for which the founder had been longing since October 2, 1928, as we see from a letter in which he communicated to the Vicar-General the long-awaited event: "Finally, following



As of October, 1934 the DYA Student Residence occupied two apartments on the third floor of this building at 50 Ferraz Street (Madrid) while a fourth floor apartment housed the Academy.

the conversation I had the honor of having with you last Saturday about this, on Sunday (the day before yesterday) holy Mass was celebrated in the chapel of this house, and His Divine Majesty found a new home. Thus the desires of so many years (since 1928) were more than fulfilled." (9)

His apostolate flourished, as God chose to reward his constant prayer, his severe penances and his effort and dedication in forming these university students. As if that weren't enough, he had to struggle tirelessly against having too much to do, not to mention the difficult times that Spain was then going through. Meanwhile, from a confessional in the church of the Foundation of St. Elizabeth, the Servant of

God carried out a fruitful task of spiritual guidance, by which he communicated this same spirit to women. From among them would come the first vocations to the women's branch of Opus Dei. Early in 1936 he was already thinking of increasing the number of Opus Dei's centers in Spain, while he dreamed of doing the same in other countries.

The tiny seed that the Lord had planted in the founder's heart had taken root in other hearts. Thus was fulfilled what the Servant of God had written: "The closer an apostle is to God, the more universal his desires. His heart expands and takes in everybody and everything in its longing to lay the universe at the feet of Jesus." (10)

- (1) Letter, Jan. 25, 1932.
- (2) *Registro Historico Fundador* 21504, no. 110, note 81.
- (3) *The Way*, no. 178.
- (4) *Ibid.*, no. 401.
- (5) Letter, Jan. 14, 1934.
- (6) Letters, Aug., 1934, and Aug. 20, 1934.
- (7) *The Way*, no. 479.
- (8) Letter, Oct. 30, 1934.
- (9) Letter, April 2, 1935.
- (10) *The Way*, no. 764.

Thanks to his spiritual influence...

With heroic faithfulness to God's will and fortified by constant prayer and mortification, Msgr. Josemaria Escrivá de Balaguer filled his work with effort and with hope. Thus, for 47 years, he inspired and directed the apostolic development of Opus Dei throughout the world.

The principal task of Opus Dei is to foster the spiritual growth of its members so that they, in turn, may personally become effective, apostolic Christians in the world and in society.

The essential apostolate of Opus Dei, in words of the founder, is carried out personally by each member at his place of work, with his family, among his friends. It is a work that goes unnoticed, that doesn't lend itself to statistics, but which gives rise to fruits of sanctity in thousands of souls. They thus learn to follow Christ, quietly but effectively, while engaged in their everyday professional occupations. (*Conversations with Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer*, no. 71).

Nevertheless, as the founder pointed out in response to a journalist's question, **Opus Dei, as a body, also sponsors "corporate" apostolates, with the help of so many people not belonging to the Work and often not even Christian. These undertakings address themselves to the many problems confronting contemporary society. They range from educational to charitable centers, from trade to professional schools, etc.** (*Conversations...*, no. 84).

This *Bulletin* will review briefly some of the many apostolic works that have come into being, thanks to the spiritual impulse of Opus Dei's founder. Each is endowed with its own personality in keeping with the needs of place and time.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PIURA

Piura is a handsome Peruvian city, the capital of a province of the same name, located some 700 miles north of Lima. Its weather is hot and dry; its main resource is farming. Today large-scale projects are also making the city a promising industrial and educational center.

In a sandy expanse fit only for growing carob beans there was born in 1968 the



One of the university buildings.

University of Piura — the result of two effective concerns that converged. On the one hand was the apostolic initiative of a group of members and cooperators of Opus Dei, who wanted to give a Christian answer to the area's educational and developmental needs. On the other was the interest and support of the city. Today the white silhouettes of the university buildings dot a campus of over two hundred acres.

Opus Dei's founder was the university's first chancellor. Speaking in Lima in 1974 to a group connected with the university, he said: "I love the University and all the people of Piura. In a special way do I love the faculty, the students, the staff: all of you. I'm obliged to do so, because I am the chancellor....The University of Piura represents a great good for souls, for minds, for all the people of Peru...."

This was greeted with applause, but the Father interjected: "That applause — it's for the faculty, it's for the students, who have never gone on strike. And why would you strike? Professors and students are not antagonists. They are two bodies that pull in the same direction, hitched to the same wagon, with a wonderful spirit of sacrifice. And so we have to believe that this institution, with God's blessing, will expand and grow; day by day we will be adding schools and departments of every kind." (1)

The founder's words reflect the constant encouragement he poured into the university. Following his lead, the university has grown up to answer the region's needs, particularly for competent professionals. Currently its more than 1500 students are distributed among the schools of liberal arts, engineering (various branches), journalism and business administration. Besides the normal curriculum, the university has established a Service of Cultural Extension that offers programs for the area's professionals in varied fields:



The Servant of God in the Larboleda Center in Lima, July 29, 1974. In the gathering are professors and students of the University of Piura.

engineering, commerce, secondary education, economics....Piura's location, furthermore, has favored it for launching various international programs at the service of other Andean countries.

The university offers a well-rounded education that includes human and Christian formation, along with intellectual and professional training. Characteristic of the young university is an emphasis on personal freedom and responsibility, as well as fellowship and mutual cooperation. Students thus feel stimulated to orient their efforts and abilities toward serving others.

Indicative of the university's desire to provide an integral education is the ratio of professors to students, which stands at 1 to 9. No student need underperform because of lack of attention on the part of the faculty.



In the chemistry laboratory.

Only 13 percent of Piura's students can afford to pay full tuition. A similar proportion is granted partial scholarships. The rest, owing to their precarious finances, are awarded full scholarships. The university must, therefore, seek support from many contributors, supplemented by income from the engineering school whose services are contracted by local industry.

This sketch of the university suffices to underline the Christian and human mission it aims to accomplish in keeping with the vision of its first chancellor. A recent event gives a good illustration of this. Unusually heavy rains throughout the first half of 1983 drenched this part of Peru. A state of emergency gripped the city for months on end. The university campus was partially inundated. For the duration, the university set up an emer-

gency committee to encourage and coordinate the volunteer efforts of teachers and students alike to see the city and province through these straits. Their response was the materialization of a constant teaching of Opus Dei's founder:

"The university must inculcate in students a mind to serve: to serve civil society by harnessing their professional work to the common good and through their civic-mindedness. University students need to be responsible; they need to have a healthy concern for others' problems and a generous spirit to confront those problems and seek to find the best solutions. To bring all that about in students is the university's task." (2)

NOTES

- (1) *Registro Historico Fundador* 20771, pp. 336-339.
- (2) *Conversations with Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer*, no. 74.

Letters Received

WORDS DIRECTLY TO ME

My husband and I had not been practicing Catholics for about ten years. He had become an atheist as a result of having spent much time reading works opposed to the faith. I was simply lazy.

An acquaintance called me and invited me to an evening of recollection. For some strange reason I had a strong desire to go. I was very impressed by the simple piety I witnessed, and the strong faith of the women I met. I took home some literature, and the words of Msgr. Escrivá seemed to speak directly to me. I prayed to him, asking him to make me strong enough to practice my faith, and also not to let my husband ridicule the booklets I brought home.

I found my husband reading the booklets the next morning. He also felt as though Msgr. Escrivá had written directly to him. He asked if we could go to church that weekend.

Since then we have gone to confession and communion regularly. We have also become cooperators of Opus Dei. Needless to say, we have never been so happy before!

X.X., Fair Lawn, New Jersey

NOT AN ISOLATED WEEK

I must share with you the influence Msgr. Josemaría has had on my life!

One year ago I began a new career in the communications industry. Almost immediately things began to go badly — my new boss told me very frankly I wasn't producing up to expectations and he wasn't at all convinced the job was right for me.

I had moved hundreds of miles away from my family (I am single) and in addition to being very lonely I was becoming paralyzed with fear.

Months before I had picked up your literature in a church and was impressed.

Now I started to use it... although it took six months of a tense work situation while I thought I could "work out this problem my own way."

Two days after I began praying to Fr. Josemaría to intercede with God in my job problems, I made an important contact on my regular work rounds. One day later, that contact brought unexpected business to my company and I got the credit!

Two days after that, it happened again — another important contact and more business (all in addition to my regular duties.) A week later a colleague remarked, "Boy, you've had a good week."

But it wasn't just an isolated week. I kept improving my performance, most of it thanks to strange coincidences that hadn't been happening before.

The effects of prayer didn't only bring material successes. The very first day I prayed to Fr. Josemaría I had a sense of God-given peace that had not been with me for years. That is a more profound effect than any "coincidence." It was a sense of grace that came into my life.

I am convinced this wonderful man is with God and interceded for me when I asked for it. Now my family is praying to him and experiencing many of the same wonderful effects!

I pray the church may recognize the place he has in Heaven...and I will continue to pray for him and to him.

J.H., Hazelton, Pennsylvania

Letters Received

THE TUMOR DISAPPEARED

We live in the small town of Juanacatlán, about an hour away from Guadalajara (Mexico). My sister suffered from a cancerous tumor and we hospitalized her in Guadalajara. Members of the family used to take turns keeping her company. After some time she worsened to such an extent that the physician called to tell us that nothing further could be done, an operation was out of the question, and the best thing was to take her home so she could die in peace.

We were all worried, to say the least, but with the hope that Msgr. Escrivá was going to perform a miracle. From that moment on we began to beg him more insistently to intercede for her cure.

The day we brought her home, she was in great pain and could barely sleep. We asked the parish priest to bring her communion the following day. But the next day she couldn't take even a sip of water, much less a tiny particle of the host. We were pained at the prospect of her dying without receiving communion and so we prayed with greater intensity still. I decided to place the prayer card for private devotion of the Servant of God directly on the tumor; she immediately fell asleep and remained so for nearly two hours. On opening her eyes she asked for a little milk, which she was able to drink perfectly. She went back to sleep, longer this time. When she awoke a second time, she asked for a normal meal. The pain had disappeared. When I touched the area where there had been a very noticeable tumor, I found not even the slightest lump.

We took her to the doctor who had treated her. He was surprised to see her and told her quite frankly that he was sure she had already died.

M.C.S., Juanacatlán, Mexico

IN THE END JUST A SCARE

My oldest son was bit in the hand by a funnel-web spider while lying in bed. This spider is one of the deadliest in the world; shortly before, several people, both adults and children, had met death at the hands of the funnel-web.

The immediate effect of the spider bite was acute pain; the boy began to scream. His hand and forearm swelled up. I caught the spider and put it in a glass jar; then we raced the boy and the spider to the district hospital. Meanwhile we continually prayed to Msgr. Escrivá, hoping all would turn out well.

The hospital attendants told us that the funnel-web was a male, whose poison is six times deadlier than that of the female, making it the most toxic there is. No one in the hospital had heard of any of its victims surviving.

Soon after my son was admitted to the hospital, the pain and symptoms began to subside. After three hours of observation and no medical treatment, the hospital released him.

The doctors weren't able to offer any satisfactory medical explanation. We attribute the result to the intercession of Msgr. Escrivá.

J.A.W., Australia

AN OPPORTUNE QUESTION

Due to various family matters and my reduced income, I found myself in serious financial difficulties. In those straits I turned to Msgr. Escrivá, whose prayer card I had come upon in a church. Today I visited a friend who's on in years; I had no intention of speaking to her of my troubles. Shortly before saying good-bye, she suddenly asked me, "Don't you need money?" I was left speechless for several moments. She gave me 500 shillings. She's not a religious person, but I was so happy that I told her that I had prayed a novena, and I had to explain what that is. When she handed the money over to me, she added, "I'll give you more later on."

H.K., Vienna, Austria

For the past four years, my husband and I were trying to conceive another child. After trying all reasonable methods and losing all our faith and hope, a friend of mine came to me suggesting that I pray to the founder of Opus Dei. Little by little my faith returned, as I saw the changes in my husband's soul: he was actually talking about God and about going to Mass. I couldn't believe my eyes! — My husband, who had never thought of such a thing. Then and only then was when I started talking, not praying, to Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer. To my surprise, two weeks later I was pregnant! I kept talking to him during my 9 months of pregnancy, asking for the baby to be healthy, and for it to be a girl this time as I already had a boy. And on the 18th of June, 1984, my little girl was born, and as healthy as she could be.

Now I continue to talk to him, for I know I have a friend in heaven; I also talk and pray to God, asking Him that Msgr. Balaguer's beatification and canonization come soon, as I believe he truly deserves it.

X.X., Miami, Florida

A friend called to ask for prayers. Her 22 year old daughter was travelling and due to return home on March 1st. The family had not heard from her from the time she left home a week before, and when they called the school where she was staying they were told that it was closed for the semester break and there was no one on campus.

She was quite concerned because the girl is normally considerate and was sure that something had happened since she had not come home or called.

On March 5th the mother called the security department of the school and asked them to begin to search for her since such a long absence was unusual.

As soon as I hung up the phone, I prayed the prayer card three times in its entirety and asked Msgr. Escrivá to grant her the favor that the daughter would call. I reminded him that this woman had always been a wonderful friend, ready to help us when we needed her.

She called back 5 minutes later to say that her daughter had called and everything was all right.

D.A.M., New York City

Every day I ask Msgr. Escrivá to watch over my children, especially when they drive the car.

There was a heavy snowfall in Ohio on Tuesday, February 27. My son, Carlos, had to go out with the car in order to take care of several small tasks, as my husband was in bed with a cold.

Fifteen minutes after he left, we received a telephone call telling us that our son had had an accident near our house. We went out immediately to look for our son. When we arrived we saw that the car, a Renault, was completely destroyed in the front. Due to the ice on the road, he could not stop; the car ran into the intersection with the main road, and another car hit him in front on his opposite side. He was very lucky, as it was only a question of inches and the car would have been hit on the driver's side.

When we arrived, we saw that the police had laid him down, and that he had been struck on the head and knee. They were awaiting the arrival of the ambulance to examine him more closely. My husband told them that he was a doctor and that he wanted to check him right away. There were four cars involved in the accident and none of the drivers suffered serious injuries.

When I saw our son, I was relieved to see that he was all right. I then turned and saw the prayer for private devotion to the Servant of God on top of the glove compartment, and Msgr. Escrivá was smiling at me. I began to cry with great emotion. My son told me that when he saw that he would not be able to stop the car, he gripped the steering wheel and began to pray to Msgr. Escrivá. He said that after the accident the first thing he saw was the prayer card on his legs; he took hold of it, gave thanks, and put it on top of the glove compartment.

It was a true miracle that my son and the others were not more seriously injured. The car could not be driven; a crane came to take it away, and it seems that it will be impossible to repair it.

A.A., Columbus, Ohio

Letters Received

I gave a friend of mine a prayer card of Msgr. Escrivá. She told me that she got a number of her acquaintances to pray for another friend, who had an infected lung and would have to be operated on. The problem, however, was that if there was surgery, he couldn't take some examinations that were crucial to him. They all decided to pray intensely to Msgr. Escrivá. When the sick man went to see the doctor, he was told the X-rays showed the infection had disappeared. Consequently he was fit and could forget about the surgery.

V.M., Zambia

For three and a half years I entrusted to Msgr. Escrivá a matter that worried me a lot. My daughter had fallen in love with a young divorcee. Try as I might to get her to see that she was about to make a big mistake, there was no way to dissuade her from getting married. I continued to ask Msgr. Escrivá to help her understand, but things went from bad to worse. The wedding date was set. One month before, how we don't know, my daughter broke off the engagement. We still don't know how this seeming impossibility came about. Surely we owe everything to the most powerful intercession of Msgr. Escrivá.

X.X., Columbia, Md.

I had wanted to become a Catholic for two years. When I had decided on baptism, my father objected, saying that no member of his family would ever become a Catholic. And when my father says no, he means it. There was no way to bring him around. At that time he was anxious moreover about a matter that had reached the courts.

A friend told me to put the prayer card of Msgr. Escrivá beneath the pillow of his bed. I also prayed the card so my father would change his mind.

Two months later my father took me aside to tell me he no longer objected to my becoming a Catholic. I was baptized in the Catholic Church, and my father, who had always been against the Catholic religion, attended both the baptism and Mass.

His court problem led him to drink heavily. I prayed a lot to Msgr. Escrivá and I offered up sacrifices. At that time my father was studying, and he had to face some examinations. He came through them well and from then on he stopped drinking and put a lot more diligence into his studies.

R.N., Nairobi, Kenya

While there is no way to adequately thank you for your prayers during such a crucial period for me, I want to express my deep gratitude and thanks to you and to all the members of Opus Dei. I have no recollection of any of the events (or anything else, for that matter) during a period of 12 days, but my sister has informed me that on one day of my illness (my worst) I was in respiratory failure and my kidneys shut down. She said that it was when you said the prayer for private devotion to Msgr. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer. The following day there was a dramatic improvement!

I feel very humbled by the whole experience. Would you pass along my deep gratitude to all who prayed for me? I have prayed to Msgr. Escrivá on a regular basis ever since Mom gave me the prayer card. If you have any extra copies, could you send them so I can share them with my friends?

I feel fine and have regained 16 of the 80 lbs. that I lost while on my "hospital vacation"; I haven't been able to write until now. It's wonderful to be alive, after one is very ill. Priorities in life become more evident and "little things" become important.

Thank you again, and please don't stop praying for me!

E.McD., Bangor, Maine

I prayed to the Servant of God Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer to intercede for me before God to resolve a very grave situation in which I found myself, and I was heard. Everything worked out fine. Thanks. I enclose a donation towards his cause of beatification.

X.X., England

For more than a year I have suffered from a painful hernia. At times the pain was so great I couldn't work. One day I felt miserable. Then an elderly fellow visited me at home and gave me a copy of the *Bulletin* before leaving. Thereupon I read the *Bulletin* and many of the favors described there. I prayed to God through the powerful intercession of Msgr. Escrivá with great confidence. The following day I felt fine and now I can carry out any kind of physical labor. I am very grateful to that loving and compassionate father, Msgr. Escrivá.

A.S.F., Tuticorin, India

My uncle became gravely ill and was taken to the hospital. I hadn't seen him in many years, but I knew that in religious matters he was apathetic, specifically with regard to confession. I began to commend the matter to Msgr. Escrivá, asking him not to let him die without confession and the last sacraments. I went to visit him practically every day; little by little he began to pray, after so many years. I left him a copy of the *Bulletin* and members of his family also prayed to Msgr. Escrivá on his behalf.

The day we brought him a priest, he agreed to go to confession; he was anointed with the holy oils while still fully conscious.

He died after having offered up all his sufferings and undergone everything without complaining and with great patience.

X.X., San José, Costa Rica

NEWS OF THE CAUSE OF CANONIZATION OF MSGR. JOSEMARÍA ESCRIVÁ DE BALAGUER

On May 12, 1981, the Vicariate of Rome opened the fact-finding process on the life and virtues of the Servant of God. Six days later another tribunal, set up in the Madrid Archdiocese to receive the testimony of some witnesses, also held its first session. The process in Madrid finished its work on June 26, 1984.

The Postulator of the Cause of Canonization of Msgr. Josemaría Escrivá had originally presented a long list of witnesses who personally knew Opus Dei's founder and who, in their reminiscences, covered the entire life of the Servant of God, from his infancy to his holy death.

Also in Madrid, in both 1982 and 1983, were held fact-finding hearings concerning two extraordinary cures attributed to the intercession of Msgr. Josemaría Escrivá. One dealt with the instantaneous disappearance of a tumor in a nun; the other had to do with the remission of a malignant lymphoma (leukemia) afflicting a Spanish woman. The judges received the pertinent testimony and medical documentation and remitted the record to the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome, for final determination.

Published Works of Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer

The Way

Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer has written something more than a masterpiece; he has written straight from the heart, and straight to the heart go the short paragraphs which, like a string of pearls, which is broken but yet complete, make up *The Way*.... This is a code of sanctity, but there is none of the formal rigidity of a code in the warm brotherly understanding of the author, in the paternal concern with which he sees, understands and corrects, persuading, not threatening." (*L'Osservatore Romano*, March 24, 1950).

The first version of this book was published in February, 1934 under the title of *Consideraciones Espirituales*. From then on the number of printings has been multiplying ever more rapidly. Up to now, there have been 189 printings in 36 languages, with a total of 3,141,000 copies.

A book of meditations on each of the 15 mysteries of the life of Christ and the blessed Virgin that are contemplated when saying the Holy Rosary.

Holy Rosary

The book was first published also in 1934. Since then 65 printings in 14 languages have appeared, with a total of 391,000 copies.

Conversations with Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer

A number of magazines and newspapers asked Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer specific questions dealing with the topics of greatest interest to their respective readers. Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer answered fully in writing the questions they had formulated. The book brings together the complete text of these interviews.

First published in 1968, it has since seen 32 printings in 7 languages.

Christ Is Passing By

The book is composed of some of the many homilies preached by Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer throughout his life. They constitute a profound and attractive exposition of Christian doctrine and life. His style joins theological depth to clarity of expression.

The book was first published in March, 1973. It has since gone through 45 printings in 8 languages.

Friends of God

A collection of 18 more homilies in which the author uses the Christian virtues as the thread for his friendly conversation with God. The book, written in the same intimate and direct style as the first volume of homilies, *Christ Is Passing By*, was published in 1977 and has now appeared in 27 printings in 6 languages.

The preface is written by Msgr. Alvaro del Portillo, Prelate of Opus Dei.

La Abadesa de las Huelgas

Penetrating research into an extraordinary case of quasi-episcopal jurisdiction exercised by the abbess of a famous convent in Burgos, Spain, based on original sources and documents. In Spanish.

The Way of the Cross

A new, posthumous work by Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer, the fruit of his contemplation of the scenes of Our Lord's Passion. It was prepared as an aid to prayer and a stimulus to sorrow for our sins and thanksgiving to Jesus Christ who redeemed us at the cost of his Blood.

The first edition was published in Spanish in February, 1981. There have since been 19 printings in 8 languages.

PRAYER

for private devotion

O God, You granted your servant and priest 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 of serving the Church, the Roman Pontiff and all souls with joy and simplicity, lighting up the pathways of this earth with faith and love. Deign to glorify your servant Josemaría; and, through his intercession, grant me the favor of... (here make your request). Amen.

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

In accordance 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.

We are grateful for the many letters we receive. They are a testimony of a private devotion with which so many persons the world over pray to God through the intercession of Msgr. Escrivá. We are able to include in the *Bulletin* only a few selections from among them, which describe events of vital importance as well as simple anecdotes.

We also wish to express our appreciation to those who send contributions, since it is impossible to thank everyone individually. These contributions are used to defray printing and distribution costs of the *Bulletin* which is free of charge, and to further those apostolates stemming from Msgr. Escrivá's love for souls. Tax deductible contributions should be sent to the *Bulletin on the Life of Msgr. Escrivá*, 330 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10025.

Make checks payable to *Woodlawn Foundation*.

Our readers are invited to send us the names and addresses of other persons whom they think would like to receive the *Bulletin* or prayer cards with the prayer for private devotion.

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330 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10025

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