

The Servants of God

Tomás and Paquita Alvira

Tomás Alvira (Zaragoza-Spain, 1906 - Madrid-Spain, 1992) Paquita Domínguez (Borau-Huesca-Spain, 1912 - Madrid-Spain, 1994)



Educating in Unity of Life

In his pastoral letter of 14th February 2017 Monsignor Fernando Ocariz, Prelate of Opus Dei, writes about the importance of “showing the practical effects of the spirit of Opus Dei on family and social life, so that there is a growth in unity of life – a real, Christian consistency between what people think, the way they pray, and the way they live.”¹ The educating work of Tomás and Paquita is a good example of the impact the spirit of the Work has on family life through this unity of life, certainly a decisive factor for obtaining good results in the education of the children. As the wisdom of Christian education duly reminds us, a family environment forged by the unity of life of the parents contributes greatly to shaping the personality of the children.



The whole Alvira family. The 9 children had already been born, 1957.

A biographer of the Alvira couple records this idea: “It surprised me when speaking to their children and asking for memories that the first thing they all mentioned was how their parents were always the same, whether working at home, or talking with them

or receiving friends (,,). There wasn't the slightest trace of a kind of spiritualism that might separate Christian life from the rest of the world (...). In the same way they never lowered their standards in order not to clash with unchristian environments. (..). With prudence and charity, always understanding and excusing everything, they nevertheless, when necessary, called things by their name. Their unity of life was not a technique or a novel way of understanding their relations with God. It had its roots in the depth of the Incarnation of the Word.”²

The prestige Tomás and Paquita had with their nine children and, therefore their unquestioned authority, did not come just from the sum total of their examples of piety, hard work, concern for others, and so many other virtues. It came instead from the consistency of their lives: they practised what they said, they lived the way they thought and prayed, and they did all this with great naturalness and admirable constancy. As Teresa, one of their daughters, says in her testimony: everything about them rang true. And in words of Saint John Paul II, this faith became their culture and down to the smallest details of their daily life.

When speaking about unity of life, Saint Josemaria used to say that it was the clearest sign of a full self-giving. Expressing this self-giving in the unity of their lives, Tomás and Paquita turned it into a main factor in the education of their children.

1. Pastoral Letter, 14-II-2017, 10

2. Antonio Vazquez, Tomas Alvira y Paquita Dominguez: La Aventura de un matrimonio feliz, pp. 144-145.

Answers to prayers

On January 30, my daughter Blanca was born. On February 6, the baby started having difficulty breathing so I decided to take her to the hospital. They tried using an aerosol spray and a saline solution to ease her breathing, but nothing seemed to work. Her breathing became steadily more labored and she was sent to intensive care. On returning home, I happened to see the Alvira's prayer card and said: "I'm going to get them working." And I entrusted my daughter to them.

I went back to the hospital, where my daughter had undergone a bronchoscopy. They told me that the doctor wanted to speak with me. He showed me a black plastic drawing pin that the baby had spit out. I recognized it as coming from the set my other daughters sometimes play with. He told me it seemed impossible that a small baby could have lived eight days with this in her air passage, and that without doubt she should have died. They asked me for permission to use this example in their medical classes. After showing the pin to some family members, I mislaid it and couldn't find it. Although I was convinced that the happy outcome was due to the intercession of Tomás and Paquita, I asked them for another favor: if they were the ones behind it, to help me to find the pin. And that's exactly what happened.

M.J.S.M. Spain

We have a large family. Two of my brothers were having difficulties getting married. The area where they live is suffering from a very depressed economy and they were unable to find steady work. Besides, they were now getting older and had become quite discouraged about finding wives. I began to pray to the Alvira's to solve their problems and help them get married, if that was the best for them. Last year the eldest brother finally married. He was over forty and his bride as well, and both found steady work. They've now bought a house and have a beautiful daughter. What a great favor! The second brother, who is also nearly forty, has worked off and on for the government but never received a steady position. A new state law left him out of work and he was quite discouraged. But he recently regained his job and his fiancée improved her work situation too. And now they're married.

P.G-Ll. Spain

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Prayer for private devotion

God our Father, who filled your servants Paquita and Tomás with graces so that they could bring a truly Christian spirit to their marriage life and the fulfilment of their professional and social obligations, send us your powerful Love so that we may spread to those around us the message of the greatness of fidelity and holiness in marriage. Deign to glorify your servants Paquita and Tomás and, through their intercession, grant me the favour that I ask of you... (here make your petition). Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be

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

Those who obtain favours through the intercession of the Alvira's are asked to notify the Opus Dei Prelature, Office for the Causes of Saints in Eastafrica:
Email: info.ke@opusdei.org

Publications

1. Our Lives in His Hands: An Ordinary Couple's Path to Holiness, Olga Marlin, Scepter 2018.
2. The first Supernumeraries, Studia et Documenta, vol. 12 – 2018, Luis Cano (pp. 251-302).

How can I help?

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