

CONGREGATION FOR THE CAUSES OF SAINTS

ROME

and the PERSONAL PRELATURE of the HOLY CROSS and OPUS DEI

BEATIFICATION and CANONIZATION

of the Venerable Servant of God

ÁLVARO DEL PORTILLO Y DIEZ DE SOLLANO

Titular Bishop of Vita

Prelate of the Personal Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei
(1914-1994)

DECREE ON A MIRACLE

The Venerable Servant of God Álvaro del Portillo y Diez de Sollano was born in Madrid on March 11, 1914 in a Christian home, the third of eight children. He obtained doctorates in Civil Engineering, History and Canon Law. In 1935, at the age of twenty-one, he requested admission to Opus Dei and came to be, after a prudent time, the closest collaborator of Saint Josemaría. On June 25, 1944 he was ordained a priest and moved to Rome in 1946 to assist Saint Josemaría in the government and expansion of Opus Dei. He generously carried out many tasks for the Holy See: Consultor for several Departments of the Roman Curia, and during the Second Vatican Council, Secretary of the Commission *De disciplina cleri et populi christiani*, as well as Peritus for several Commissions. On September 15, 1975 he was elected the first successor of Saint Josemaría at the head of Opus Dei. On November 28, 1982 Blessed John Paul II erected Opus Dei as a Personal Prelature and named the Venerable Álvaro del Portillo Prelate. On January 6, 1991, Blessed John Paul II ordained him a bishop. His pastoral ministry was particularly marked by faithfulness to the spirit and message proclaimed by the Founder. He was unstinting in his efforts to extend the apostolic work of the Prelature in the service of the Church. During the nineteen years in which he directed the Work, it began stable apostolic work in twenty new countries. During those

years he called more than a thousand faithful of the Prelature to the priesthood and fostered many initiatives in the area of social services. In order to realize a long-standing desire of Saint Josemaría, he founded the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome, and he encouraged many other activities in the service of souls. He also travelled to all corners of the world and everywhere preached the Gospel with fortitude. Early in the morning of March 23, 1994, just a few hours after returning from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the Lord called him into His presence. Immediately proofs of his fame of holiness sprang up throughout the world.

Among these, reports of spiritual and material favors stand out, along with many cures attributed to his intercession. Especially worthy of consideration is the cure of an infant born on July 10, 2003 with congenital (bilateral) cerebral malformation, cyanotic heart disease (Tetralogy of Fallot) and an omphalocele. During his first few days of life the infant suffered repeated hypoxic-ischaemic cerebral lesions, and on August 2, he went into cardiac arrest for between thirty to forty-five minutes due to cardiac tamponade as a result of a massive haemorrhagic pericardial effusion. During this time the doctors attempted to resuscitate the infant without success. When they were about to stop all efforts at resuscitation, the infant's cardiac activity spontaneously resumed.

While this was happening the parents, informed of the situation of their infant, intensified their prayers asking for his cure through the intercession of Venerable Álvaro del Portillo. According to the doctor's assessment, this ischaemic event ought to have caused grave neurological damage or even the death of the infant. However, from a functional point of view, the recovery was both complete and permanent.

The diocesan investigation of this cure took place in the ecclesiastical Curia of Santiago, Chile, between August 5, 2008 and August 6, 2009. On January 15, 2010 this Congregation decreed the juridical validity of that process. On October 18, 2012 the Department of Medical Advisors of the Congregation issued their assessment that medical science could not explain the cure. The Special Congress of Theological Advisors took place on December 15, 2012, and the Ordinary Session of Cardinals and Bishops on June 4, 2013, presided over by Cardinal Angelo Amato. Both of these bodies, those of the Advisors and of the Cardinals and Bishops, responded unanimously in the affirmative to the question of whether this was a miracle accomplished by God.

After having received from the Cardinal Prefect, whose signature is affixed to this decree below, a detailed report of what has just been stated, the Supreme Pontiff Francis accepted and ratified the votes of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints and declared today, July 5, 2013: *The proofs of the miracle performed by God through the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God Álvaro del Portillo y Díez de Sollano, Titular Bishop of Vita, Prelate of the Personal Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei, are known, namely the rapid, complete and permanent cure of an infant with ‘congenital cerebral malformation and cardiovascular lesions, who suffered a prolonged cardiac arrest secondary to cardiac tamponade which should have caused an anoxic-ischaemic injury to the brain.’*

The Holy Father has ordered that this Decree be made public and be recorded in the acts of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Given in Rome on the fifth day of July 2013.

Angelo Card. Amato, S.D.B.
Prefect

L. + S.

✠ Marcello Bartolucci
Titular Archbishop of Mevania
Secretary