

other members of the Mystical Body and more united to its visible head, the Pope. That's why I like to repeat: All with Peter to Jesus through Mary!" (*Christ is Passing By*, no. 139). It gives me great joy that it has been Pope Francis, also a deeply Marian Pope, who has decided to go ahead with these two canonizations. All three of them have shown us that charity is not a merely human virtue, but that it means bringing Christ to other men and women, which is what Mary did in the service of all mankind.

Soon we will grow accustomed to referring to these two shepherds as Saint John XXIII and Saint John Paul II. By canonizing them, Pope Francis, the Vicar of Christ, is helping us to see that, in God's eyes, Angelo Roncalli and Karol Wojtyła are, above all, two holy persons, a fundamental goal for the life of each man and woman. Saint John XXIII and Saint John Paul II were two priests with great hearts, with a burning love for God and all men and women. Two great saints, united by a tender love for Mary, Mother of God and our Mother.

✠ Javier Echevarría  
Prelate of Opus Dei

## Interview granted to the weekly *Pyung Hwa Sinmun*, South Korea (June 1, 2014)

*Opus Dei is still relatively unknown among the faithful of the Catholic Church of Korea. Could you please give a brief explanation about what the spirit of Opus Dei consists of? What do you hope for from the faithful of Opus Dei in Korea?*

The spirit of Opus Dei consists in trying to seek God—who is a good and merciful Father—in the activities of every day: in our family, in our work, in the occupations that we have in hand. The mission of this prelature of the Catholic Church consists in recalling that we have all been called to be saints: sanctity cannot be reduced to a goal for a privileged class, but for you, or me, for a mother or father of a family, for a young person or an aged one, rich or poor, healthy or sick. In the words of the founder, St. Josemaría Escrivá, it is a matter of a message that is “as old as the Gospel, and like the Gospel new.”

Seeking holiness in work, for example, leads one to finish things well, to be friendly, to know how to serve and to help one's companions, to arrive punc-

tually, to work with rectitude and, above all, to offer the task of each moment to God, which in this way is turned into a prayer pleasing to our Lord.

In the family, the joyful struggle for holiness demands dedicating time and affection to one's wife or husband, to the children, to one's parents, especially to the neediest members of each household. In this way, listening to and loving the others, solving the problems of the other members of the family, we help them to improve and get closer to God.

And in social life, the call to holiness is translated, also, into an invitation to be a good citizen, a good neighbor, fulfilling the obligations proper to this condition: feeling solidarity with those most in need, paying one's taxes, obeying just laws.

From the faithful of Opus Dei in Korea, I hope that they seek God, that they find him every day in prayer, and that they love him; that they give witness of their faith, with a spirit of service; that they also love their country and their family; that they finish their work well, with fidelity, and that they love the local and the universal Church.

*It is not easy to find Christ in a world that is so materialistic and secularized. What are the means that you can suggest to us in order to live as Christians and make him*

*known to others being true witnesses? How can we fill ourselves with the joy of the Gospel that the Pope is proposing to us?*

There comes to mind a thought that St. Josemaría left reflected in *The Way*, and that Pope Francisco has repeated to us in various ways: "these world crises are crises of saints." The world and the Church need saints, people who are young in spirit, interested and active in the debates of modern society, who always put before themselves love of God and of others, and not their own interests. For this they need the grace of God, that reaches us above all in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist and Penance.

Holiness always brings with it joy. To live like good Christians and to make Christ known as true witnesses, we have to transmit joy and optimism. This joy is compatible with one's daily difficulties and problems. Jesus Christ knows these problems, but he also tells us that we have to walk always joyfully because he has risen. This is something that the martyrs of Korea understood very well, when they gave their life for the greatest ideal possible, love for and union with God, which necessarily results in love and union with others.

Following the teaching of the Pope, I encourage you to read every day one or two scenes of the

Gospel. To fill you with the joy of the Sacred Text, the first thing is to know it well, to read it, I insist, meditating on it for a few minutes each day. St. Josemaría recommended following the scenes or the passages “like one more person.” In a word, introducing ourselves into the Gospel scene that we have before our eyes, living it and making it our own, applying his teachings to today’s daily life.

*Opus Dei is known as an example of fidelity and collaboration with the Pope and the Church. Pope Francis has said that the center of the Church is Christ. I believe that what he wants to tell us is that the Church does not affirm itself, but what it desires is to propose Christ as the reason for the existence and foundation of the Church. How should the Church of today and the future be so that it does not limit itself to being a conservator of itself, but rather a message of Christ who saves?*

As St. Josemaría used to repeat, Opus Dei is a tiny part of the Church. Together with all the other Catholics, we want to follow Christ, well united to the Pope, his vicar on earth. Pope Francis has arrived as another gift of the Holy Spirit. I am moved when he speaks of personal conversion, a key to the renovation of the Church.

Bishop Alvaro del Portillo, the first successor of St. Josemaría, who visited Korea and

will be beatified this coming September, insisted that, in order to be faithful of the Church, we need a constant conversion in our personal life. We will renew the Church if we first renew ourselves. A constant path for that conversion pushes us to love the indications of the Pope and—as I recalled earlier—have recourse frequently to the sources of grace, especially to the sacraments of Penance and of the Eucharist: in that way Christ will build up the Church in every faithful Catholic.

*Observing the apostolate of Opus Dei we can see that communion with all, especially with the poor is fundamental. Various of the activities of Opus Dei respond to this message. Why is charity with all, especially with the poor, important? How can we grow in this communion with all of the others?*

Charity is another name for holiness. Jesus constantly in the Gospel spoke to us of charity with all, including those who can give us nothing in exchange. This requires the sacrifice of overcoming our comfort and, at times, our personal tastes: we have to love those who have nothing and can give us nothing; the poor, the helpless, children, the sick. And also those who do not love us. We have to make the effort to see Christ in the face of all, especially of those who suffer, and treat them as we would want them to treat us if we found ourselves in their situation. That is to say, to

treat them as we would treat Jesus himself. We will grow in communion with others when we live true charity, which demands loving others as God loves them and because God loves them.

*Korea is the only country in the world that is divided into two. We say that we want peace, but we are not good at reconciliation. What can we do to grow in wisdom to obtain peace and reconciliation above and beyond ideology?*

This seems to me to be a very good question, and it prompts me to renew my desire to pray every day for peace in this wonderful land. The specific solutions correspond rather to the civil sphere; nevertheless as a priest and bishop, I will dare to point out that we can all do something more to love and respect our neighbor, to help them to get closer to God and to respect others. The day that we see in the other man our brother in Christ, we have taken a very important step towards reconciliation. Precisely St. John XXIII, recently canonized together with St. John Paul II, in his well-known encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, spoke of the two pillars of peace being justice and charity. And both of these rest, in turn, on respect for the dignity of the person. Both in Korea and in the rest of the world to attain peace and reconciliation, one needs to get rid of everything that supposes an offense to the dignity of the person.

## Interview granted to *Archisevilla Digital*, Spain (June 20, 2014)

By Ana Capote

*Don Javier, what do you ask of the faithful of the Work in relation to the dioceses?*

I ask that we pull the cart in the same direction as the bishop of the diocese, and that we are ready to learn from others. The fact that a faithful of the diocese is a member of the prelature of Opus Dei has to lead to a closer union, shown in deeds, with the diocesan bishop and the other faithful of that particular Church.

*And more specifically, what do you ask of the faithful of Opus Dei in Seville?*

I ask that the men and women in Seville who are faithful of Opus Dei pray for vocations to the diocesan priesthood, for the catechists and educators, for the holiness of the families in Seville, and for the other intentions of their beloved Archbishop Juan José Basenji. Also I encourage them to increase every day their apostolic zeal, so that the Church in Seville may obtain abundant fruit from the prelature's work of evangelization in this land. We