



# Report on the Life and Reputed Holiness of the Servant of God

## ISIDORO ZORZANO

**Member of Opus Dei and  
Industrial Engineer**

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To make known to the world the life of this Servant of God is to encourage the world to seek a better life. Isidoro's example demonstrates that holiness is accessible to every man, that each of us can find it naturally in our secular professional work and social environment.

*The purpose of this Paper, which is to be published periodically, is to make known the various aspects of the life of The Servant of God as well as some of the favours obtained through his intercession.*

### THE PROCESS OF BEATIFICATION BEGINS

The opening session in the process of Isidoro's beatification was held on 11th October, 1948, the feast of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin. His Excellency Most Reverend Monsignor D. Leopoldo Eljo Garay, Patriarch of the Indies, and Bishop of Madrid-Alcalá presided over the solemn function. In attendance were Monsignor Escrivá de Balaguer, President-General of Opus Dei, numerous members of this Secular Institute, the relatives of Isidoro Zorzano, engineers of the General Railway Offices and the National Railway Company, professors from the School of Industrial Engineering, many fellow students, as well as employees and personnel who worked under the direction of this Servant of God.

Isidoro sanctified himself in the fulfilment of his duties amid the machinery and the workshops of the Malaga railway yards, among the blueprints in his office in Madrid, while performing his quiet and humble apostolic labours according to the spirit of Opus Dei.

He was convinced that the sanctification of the work before him at each moment was to be his path to his goal and he spared no effort to attain it.

On August 24th, 1930, he felt the call of God urging him to acquaint himself with Opus Dei, which at that time was just coming into being and which was later to become the first Secular Institute of the Church. His craving for sanctification immediately found a safe channel in which to travel, and from that moment forward he gave himself up to the attainment of sanctity with an admirable determination which culminated in his last illness, a prolonged agony of more than six months, during which time he offered all his sufferings to God for the needs of His Church and of Opus Dei.

### Brief Biographical Notes

Isidoro was born in Buenos Aires on 13th September, 1902. Three years

later, his family moved to Spain where he lived until his death.

At Ortigosa de Cameros he received his elementary school training, and in Logroño his secondary school education. After that he prepared to enter the Special School for Industrial Engineers in Madrid where he studied during the years 1920-27. Isidoro was now an engineer. His life progressed without any extraordinary occurrences. He owed his professional successes principally to his tenacity and constancy and to his exemplary industry.

He was employed for some months by the Spanish Society of Naval Construction as superintendent of railway machinery at Matagorda, and in 1928 he joined the Andalusian Railway Company at Malaga. During this period of his life he planned the electrification of the Cordoba-Belmez, the Guadix-Almeria, and the Malaga-Bobadilla Railway lines. Later in 1932, he was transferred to the general workshops of the same company as inspector of locomotives and tenders.



His working day while at Malaga was a very strenuous one. He rose early in the morning and, before beginning his work, made his meditation and assisted at Holy Mass. His whole life was permeated with the spirit of Opus Dei; for this very reason his life was not a monotonous succession of days, but was a constant progress which gathered momentum as it advanced towards sanctity.

When he finished his daily tasks in the workshops, Isidoro taught higher mathematics in the Technical School. Despite these activities he still found time to listen to and advise in his own rooms a group of students from the school, among them some of his subordinate workers whom he unselfishly directed and guided in their professional aspirations.

In addition to his work as an engineer Isidoro conducted a successful apostolate among his associates and employees as treasurer of the Diocesan Council of Catholic Action, as a member of the Federation of Catholic Students of which he was the founder at Malaga and also as teacher in the House of the Child Jesus, a home for street urchins and orphans.

This pamphlet is sent free to anyone who desires to know something about Isidoro. Those, however, who wish to extend the devotion to him or to show their thankfulness for favours received can help by sending their contributions towards the publication of this Paper and the extension of the apostolate in which Isidoro laboured.

### CONTRIBUTIONS

We acknowledge the contributions sent us by the following people: J.M.S. from Newcastle-on-Tyne, £25; L.J. from London, £5; M.M.R. from Manchester, £1; R.S. from Cambridge, £18; W.J. from London 5/-; F.W.L. from Glasgow, £2; L.L. from London, £1 10s. X.X. from Cambridge, £2; J.F.L. from London, £10; V.J.J. from Oxford, £2.

### PRAYER FOR PRIVATE DEVOTION

O God, Who filled Your servant Isidoro with so many treasures of grace in the exercise of his professional duties in the midst of the world: grant that I also may learn to sanctify my ordinary work and become an apostle to my friends and associates. Deign to glorify Your servant, and through his intercession, grant me the favour I request (*here make your petition*). Amen.

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

In conformity with the decrees of Pope Urban VIII, we declare that this prayer is not intended for public devotion and that in interpreting the favours received through his intercession and the sanctity of the Servant of God, in no way is it intended that the judgment of the Holy Church be anticipated.

In 1936 he went to Madrid. Although he was born in Argentina and therefore could have left the Red zone when the civil war began he preferred to remain, occupied to the full with service to his people at the serious risk of his life. Our Lord has said: "This is the greatest love a man can show, that he should lay down his life for his friends." Isidoro never hesitated to expose his life to danger.

Under the Red régime he went to the prisons to give moral and material aid to the imprisoned. Meanwhile he succeeded, using with ingenuity all the means at his disposal, in hearing Mass and receiving Holy Communion as frequently as possible and he made it possible too for others to do the same.

In 1939, at the end of the Spanish war, he took over at Madrid the direction of the Research Centre for Standards for the entire national railway network; at the same time he occupied positions in Opus Dei which entailed a great deal of work.

He became very ill, and the diagnosis at the first onset of the illness was that the malady would be fatal. Isidoro was told of the seriousness of his condition as soon as it was known. Racking pain, persistent insomnia, fever, lack of appetite, intense fatigue caused by the slightest

movement, frightening sensations of suffocation—all these torments lasted not only for a few weeks, but for many months. It was not the intense suffering which is fleeting or momentary and may therefore be made endurable by some hidden reserve-strength of the will, but rather was it a long, implacable suffering which demanded a super-human endurance. The Servant of God, however, demonstrating a heroic fortitude, had forgotten himself, so completely was he pre-occupied with others. All who met him during this period remember his sincere, contagious cheerfulness, his spirit of mortification, and his utter confidence in God.

Such, in general outline, was the exemplary life of this man of God in the midst of the world. On 15th July, 1943, at half past five in the evening, Isidoro Zorzano died with that same peace and calm which always characterized him and which he had known how to maintain throughout his entire period of illness.

As a fitting conclusion to these lines, we may include some words written by one of his companions on the day of his death: "Isidoro is dead. He passed through life unnoticed. He fulfilled his duty. He loved much. He was faithful in the little things. And he sacrificed himself always."

THIS PAPER IS PUBLISHED WITH ECCLESIASTICAL APPROVAL



## FAVOURS OBTAINED THROUGH HIS INTERCESSION

Numerous favours, many of which are truly extraordinary have been obtained since the death of the Servant of God through his intercession.

On a variety of occasions and under many circumstances great numbers of people have invoked with faith Isidoro's help, asking his aid for the solution of spiritual and material problems of all types.

All who have invoked his name in suffering and in sickness, in contradictions and in problems, have found strength for their souls and, in a great number of cases, the answers to their petitions.

People of all social groups, and many countries, have learnt to trust in the efficacy of his intercession.

The following are some of the numerous favours obtained through the intercession of the Servant of God.

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### TUBERCULOSIS CURES

\*\* R.U. had long suffered from a very grave case of tuberculosis of the lungs. The prognosis was serious, and the doctors had announced the inevitable need of such drastic treatment as pneumothorax or phrenicotomy. No sooner had the operation been decided upon, however, than there began a rapid healing which led to the closing of the lung lesion without the assistance of surgery. The specialist who had been treating R.U. was extremely surprised at this turn of events, for even with an exclusive rest treatment the cure would have been very slow. R.U. had, however, entrusted his cure to the Servant of God, a piece of whose sudarium he had carried as a relic.

\*\* J.M., of Chicago, attributes entirely to the intercession of the Servant of God the cure of his brother who had been in hospital for over a year with tuberculosis.

### PLEURISY

\*\* A.F., in Rome, suffered an attack of pleurisy. He immediately recommended his recovery to the Servant of God. The doctors were quite certain in predicting a long sickness with high fever and a prolonged convalescence. Nevertheless, his recovery was so rapid that the doctor in charge expressed his astonishment at the "almost miraculous" cure.

### A ROAD ACCIDENT

\*\* U. was the victim of a road accident and as a result suffered fractures of the femur, knee, and foot; severe haemorrhage also set in. After an operation the leg was placed in a cast and the course of recovery progressed normally until, about two weeks later, a blood clot formed which paralyzed the patient. Although the doctor was pessimistic about the patient's recovering, A.C., a friend of U., invoked the intercession of the Servant of God. "I didn't care what they thought," said A.C. later, "because I knew that Isidoro, through his intercession, would bring about his cure; therefore I continued to believe despite the unbelief of the others."

A few days later the patient was out of danger.

### IMPAIRED VISION

\*\* F.A., a lawyer living in Rome, suffered an eye ailment which became seriously aggravated, taking the form of a severe conjunctivitis and keratitis to which was added an infiltration of the cornea of the right eye. He offered up his sufferings to God, and asked the Servant of God to intercede for him. In a few days the infection of the right eye disappeared and later both eyes returned to their normal state. He was thus enabled to present himself for his legal examinations. He attributed the cure to the intercession of the Servant of God.

### INTESTINAL TUBERCULOSIS

\*\* In Barcelona, Miss J.B. was given up by the doctors among whom was Dr. R.C., a specialist in diseases of the alimentary tract. He gave her but a very short time to live, for she was suffering from a very advanced case of intestinal tuberculosis. The case was so serious that she was scarcely able to eat. She entrusted her cure with great fervour to the Servant of God and the lesions disappeared completely without leaving the slightest scar. Today she leads a completely normal life in a religious institution.

### VARIOUS FINANCIAL FAVOURS

\*\* C.M. from Chicago writes: "After having lost my job, I prayed each day to Isidoro and asked him to intercede for me. My prayers were answered, and I received a position far better than I had ever hoped."

\*\* A.V. reports from Coimbra, Portugal, that he was in great need of credit without which he would forfeit a great sum of money which had been posted as a bond for the construction of a highway and recommended the problem to the Servant of God. A few days later the bank made the necessary money available on terms far more advantageous than he had ever expected.

Anyone who has obtained favours upon invoking Isidoro's aid is requested to notify either of the addresses listed below. These notices must be very detailed, generally including names and addresses, although, if the writer expresses the desire, the personal identification will be eliminated when the report is published in this leaflet.

#### Address:

Very Rev. Postulator of the Cause of Beatification of the Servant of God Isidoro Zorzano,  
Via Pompeo Magno 9,  
Rome, Italy.

#### Or:

Very Rev. John A. Galarraga,  
18 Netherhall Gardens,  
London, N.W.3.

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\*\* X.X., in Madrid, needed twenty thousand pesetas to meet an urgent bill, but he had no humanly possible means of obtaining the money. After many visits to the tomb of Isidoro, during which he "asked for the twenty thousand pesetas," X.X. visited a relative on an entirely different kind of business. During the course of the conversation, the relative astounded him by making the gratuitous offer of twelve thousand pesetas with the immediate promise of eight thousand more. X.X. realised, in the midst of his understandable emotion, that the two amounts added up to the necessary twenty thousand pesetas. He had no hesitation in ascribing this favour to the intercession of the Servant of God.

\*\* Several business concerns, in a similar manner, have entrusted the success of their financial affairs to the Servant of God, and have always received rapid and unexpected solutions to their problems. Among other instances, the case of a company in Madrid may be cited; the company had for two years been dragging along in difficult financial conditions because a client, with evident bad faith, refused to pay a huge debt; there was no feasible way of collecting the debt. The Managing Director of the company referred the matter to Isidoro, and very soon the entire debt was recovered, on 15th July, the anniversary of Isidoro's death.

\*\* C.P., a student of Dublin, was in a very distressing financial situation. The annual grant he used to receive was stopped and the income of the private classes he gave was not sufficient at all to cover his needs.

He recommended the matter to Isidoro intensely and with great faith. Very soon he obtained what it had seemed impossible to get before; the grant he had received in previous years was unexpectedly restored to him in full.



## PROFESSIONAL MATTERS

**\*\*** In professional problems of a difficult nature the intercession of the Servant of God has also been invoked successfully.

In addition to other cases the following may be cited. During World War II, two chemists were doing research at a European university. It was becoming impossible for them to remain in the city, and at the same time it was imperative that they complete the work begun. They had neither the time nor the apparatus required to complete their investigation. The only equipment available was being used almost all day long for military research work. The two scientists recommended their problem to the Servant of God with amazing results. Things turned out so that, when they needed a special apparatus, the person using it for war work left it for them to use for the moment. In addition, the air raid warnings, which had frequently interrupted their work, diminished, no longer making the pursuit of the work impossible. Thus, through the aid of Isidoro, the research developed so satisfactorily that it was soon finished.

## SPIRITUAL FAVOURS

**\*\*** Miss N.G.'s father was gravely ill and was to have an operation. He had not gone to confession for many years. Miss N.G. entrusted the matter to the Servant of God and with much confidence spoke to her father. He responded very favourably and, being deeply impressed, went to confession.

## VOCATIONS

**\*\*** Isidoro's zeal for the extension of God's kingdom and for the perfection of souls caused him to offer, while on his deathbed, many of his sufferings for the intention that many vocations might be dedicated generously to the service of Our Lord. Many people, after their vocations had been recommended to Isidoro, have undertaken a life of perfection in the face of all adverse circumstances. In some cases, as in that of a young student in Valencia, in Spain, the realization of the vocation was accompanied by an interior light which, in the case of this particular student, changed his entire attitude and caused him to dedicate himself to Our Lord, on the very anniversary of the death of the Servant of God.

## AN ANECDOTE

One spring evening in Madrid, in his small room at the hospital, Isidoro suffered an attack of singularly intense asphyxia. He breathed with great difficulty and could not speak above a whisper; this painful anguish caused the typical cold sweat of those who are gravely ill. A greyish light came through the window, the kind of light which produces a profound melancholy in so many people.

The Founder of Opus Dei had come to visit Isidoro, to speak of his joys and worries, and to extend to the sick man the human comfort of his paternal love. Isidoro's face lit up with that peaceful smile which was so typically his own. That day the Father told him of news which affected the Church and which was troubling the Bishop of the diocese. The sick man listened with anxious interest; it was to be seen at a glance that he had forgotten his own sufferings, so much did Isidoro love the Church with filial respect and concern for the Hierarchy.

After a few hours the Father left. Little by little the patient regained his composure. But the fever, as usual every evening at that time, mounted again and soon Isidoro's difficulty in breathing showed itself. Nevertheless, he meditated in silence.

When at nightfall they brought him a sedative, the only remedy which would allow him to sleep when besieged by such attacks, Isidoro refused to take it. He decided to offer his sufferings of that night for the needs of the Church and the happy solution of the problems which were troubling the Bishop.

## HELP AT THE HOUR OF DEATH

**\*\*** As a reward for the heroic patience with which he bore the sufferings of his own last illness, the Servant of God has obtained the same exemplary death for those who have invoked him at that hour.

Bartolomé Llorens, of Opus Dei, who died a saintly death at Catarroja, Valencia, on May 31st, 1946, recommended himself to the Servant of God with a great confidence shared by his relatives and friends. Those who attended at his death and who had also known or heard of the Servant of God, when they witnessed the cheerfulness of Bartolomé Llorens before death, were greatly impressed with the resemblance it bore to that peace which surrounded Isidoro at the time of his own painful death.

Bartolomé Llorens daily said a private prayer, which he himself had composed, in which he asked the Servant of God to intercede for his recovery, if it suited the glory of Our Lord, accepting in advance

the outcome of his illness whatever it might be. On the night of his death he smiled and said that he was "going to be reunited with Isidoro."

This Paper is Also Published in  
SPANISH, ITALIAN and PORTUGUESE.

Those who wish to extend the private devotion to Isidoro may also ask for pictures of the Servant of God, indicating the address and quantity desired. To cover the cost of printing, postage etc., please enclose 5/- for every hundred pictures.

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**WE SHOULD APPRECIATE IT IF THE READERS OF THIS PAPER  
WOULD SEND US THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF OTHER PEOPLE  
WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN RECEIVING THIS AS WELL AS  
SUCCEEDING ISSUES**

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