

## PRAYER

*O God, you granted countless graces to your priest  
Blessed Josemaría, choosing him  
as a most faithful instrument to found Opus Dei,  
a way of sanctification in daily work  
and in the fulfilment of the ordinary duties of a Christian.  
Grant that I also may learn  
to turn all the circumstances and events of my life  
into opportunities to love you and to serve the Church,  
the Pope, and all souls, with joy and simplicity,  
lighting up the paths of the earth with faith and love.  
Deign to grant the canonisation of Blessed Josemaría  
and through his intercession grant me the favour I request...  
(here make your petition). Amen.*

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

This newsletter is issued free of charge and is for private circulation only. Those who wish to give alms to help its publication and the development of the apostolic activities stemming from the spiritual influence of the founder of Opus Dei, may send donations by cheque or postal order to the address below. We would be grateful if our readers would send us names and addresses of others who might be interested in receiving this Newsletter or the prayer card of Blessed Josemaría.

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Blessed  
**JOSEMARÍA  
ESCRIVÁ**

Founder  
of Opus Dei

## A STORY

The hands of a surgeon

## INITIATIVES

A technical school  
in Nigeria

## HIS TEACHINGS

Living by faith

# Newsletter

Nº 21

2002



6 October 2002  
**Canonisation of  
Josemaría Escrivá**



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Further information on Blessed Josemaría and Opus Dei can be found on [www.opusdei.org](http://www.opusdei.org)  
A free news service is also available via e-mail.

Cover photo:  
beatification of Josemaría  
Escrivá, 17 May 1992

Blessed Josemaría Escrivá was born in Barbastro, Spain on 9 January 1902. He was ordained to the priesthood in Zaragoza on 28 March 1925. In Madrid, on 2 October 1928, by divine inspiration he founded Opus Dei, which has opened up to the faithful a new way of sanctification in the middle of the world, through the exercise of their ordinary daily work and the fulfilment of their family, social and personal obligations. On 14 February 1930 Blessed Josemaría Escrivá understood, by the grace of God, that Opus Dei should also develop its apostolate among women. On 14 February 1943 he founded the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross, inseparably united to Opus Dei. Opus Dei received definitive approval from the Holy See on 16 June 1950; and on 28 November 1982 it was established as a personal Prelature, the legal framework desired and foreseen by Blessed Josemaría Escrivá. When he rendered up his soul to God, Opus Dei had spread to five continents, with over 60,000 members of 80 nationalities, serving the Church in that spirit of total unity with and veneration for the Pope and the Bishops which Blessed Josemaría Escrivá had always practised. The founder of Opus Dei was beatified by His Holiness John Paul II in Rome on 17 May 1992. His body now rests in the prelatric Church of Our Lady of Peace (Viale Bruno Buozzi, 75, Rome).

9 January 2002 was the centenary of the birth of Blessed Josemaría, and between that date and 9 January 2003, a series of commemorative events are being organised all across the world. The principal aim of all the centenary activities is to enable many people to come closer to God and to discover the joy of Christian life.



**JOSEMARÍA ESCRIVÁ**  
CENTENARY OF HIS BIRTH

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## EDITORIAL

# A divine paradox

When the extraordinary meets the ordinary

On 20 December 2001, the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints approved a miracle attributed to the founder of Opus Dei. It involved the cure of an orthopaedic surgeon who had been suffering from chronic dermatitis, an incurable skin disease.

This might seem paradoxical to those who knew Blessed Josemaría personally during his lifetime, as also to those



who have come to know him afterwards through his writings. The founder of Opus Dei is the apostle of ordinary life, of everyday work, of the man in the street; in short, of everything that is normal and commonplace. When faced with something extraordinary, Blessed Josemaría would say, "I have no need of miracles; there are more than enough for me in the Gospel. But I do need to see you fulfilling your duty and responding to grace" (*The Way*, 362).

He shunned anything spectacular or flamboyant. He preferred the heroism to be found in common, everyday matters: in the little things of ordinary life. "Have no doubt: any kind of evasion from the honest realities of daily life is for you, men and women of the world, something opposed to the will of God" (*Conversations...*, 114).

But Blessed Josemaría Escrivá, from Heaven, has also obtained favours that are out of the ordinary.

The Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, after following the established procedures, has officially approved two such favours as miraculous cures. These are the miracles that have paved the way respectively for the beatification and the canonisation of the founder of Opus Dei.

Both are medical cases. In addition, many people also have recourse to the intercession of Blessed

Josemaría asking for other forms of help, especially in their spiritual needs. It is noticeable that among the favours obtained through the founder of Opus Dei, there are many more of a spiritual nature than those involving medical cures. However it is more difficult to assess the objectivity of spiritual favours. It is only by means of medical instruments and techniques (analyses, X-rays, clinical or surgical reports, and so on) that we are able to obtain tangible and undisputed data for experimentally verifying facts that have no natural

"A world of miracles",  
Scepter 2002  
A collection of 18  
miraculous cures  
attributed to the  
intercession of Blessed  
Josemaría Escrivá







the revelation of God reaches its fulfilment, a miracle not only shows the divinity of the Messiah, but also signifies and initiates salvation. It is a tangible proof of a God who is love and giver of life. Through faith, the extraordinary and the natural are brought together. This may explain the paradox of these extraordinary cures obtained through Blessed Josemaría. He is at once a very human and a very supernatural saint, although he himself would claim that he was "not one for miracles" (see *The Way*, 583). He encouraged everyone to have great faith in God, and to develop "that familiarity and confidence which prompts us to ask him, like children, for the moon!" (*Christ is Passing By*, 64). His canonisation will take place on 6 October next. It is true that the miracle approved last December represented a decisive step towards this event. But if we want to be faithful to the teachings of Blessed Josemaría, we cannot forget that the Church is raising him to the altars, not simply because he has worked miracles, but above all because he endeavoured each day to be "faithful in little things" (*Matthew 25:21*).

To mark the centenary various exhibitions have been arranged in different parts of the world. The photo shows the exhibition in Westminster Cathedral, London

Flavio Capucci



explanation. That is why in causes for canonisation the miracles nearly always have to do with medicine.

A miracle will always have a fundamental significance as a revelation of God's presence and action. However, theologically speaking, a miracle also has a saving significance. In Christ, in whom

## 6 October 2002: canonisation of Josemaría Escrivá

"Thank you! I wish to express my gratitude to the Blessed Trinity for sending us the gift of the saints"

Blessed Josemaría Escrivá will be proclaimed a saint on 6 October 2002. The decision of Pope John Paul II was announced at the public Consistory which took place on 26 February in the *Sala Clementina* in the Vatican, in the presence of numerous Cardinals, Bishops and other guests. At the same Consistory, the Holy Father announced the dates of canonisation for another eight Blesseds.

"All I want to say today is, thank you!" were the first words of Bishop **Javier Echevarría** when he was given the news. The Prelate of Opus Dei expressed his gratitude to the Blessed Trinity, to the Church, to the family of Blessed Josemaría and to all the priests, religious and lay people "who in some way played a part in his formation." At the same time he wanted to express his gratitude to all the poor and sick "who generously gave the only thing they had, turning their suffering into prayer for the priestly work of the founder of Opus Dei."



"He has been a father and teacher to many along

the path to holiness and apostolate," said **Guzmán Carriquiry Lecour**, Undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for the Laity. "He has been able to capture the dreams of God for humanity," stated Mgr **Domenico Sigalini**, Assistant Deputy General of Italian Catholic Action. **Carla Cotignoli**, from Focolare, expressed her joy at the canonisation of Blessed Josemaría, in whom she sees a charism by which "the laity can contribute effectively to the renewal of the world of work, of politics, of economic life, of art, and of communication, and put the soul back into the different social environments." **Giancarlo Cesana**, from Communion and Liberation, finds in this charism "all of the attraction and power of Christianity as an experience which transforms and fills with meaning every circumstance of life, even the most routine and ordinary."

From her convent in Coimbra, Sr **Lucia of Fatima** joined in the joy of the canonisation of Josemaría Escrivá, whom she not only met, but whom she also encouraged to start the apostolate of Opus Dei in Portugal.

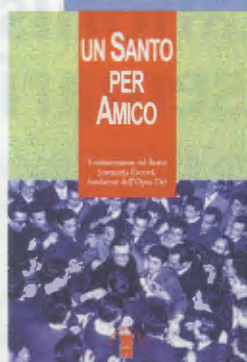
Fr **Brian Kolodiejchuck** MC, postulator of the cause of canonisation of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, referred to the commitment of the new Saint towards the poor: "in them Mother Teresa saw Christ himself. In the life of Blessed Josemaría



we also encounter a great commitment to help Christ present in those who are suffering need ... The poor, the sick, the abandoned, were his weapons in his battle to get Opus Dei under way."

Hundreds of Cardinals and Bishops from all five continents have joined in the chorus of congratulations on hearing the news, from **Antonio Rouco** (Madrid) and **Juan José Omella** (Barbastro, where the founder of Opus Dei was born), to the Vicar of Rome, **Camillo Ruini**, the Archbishop of Vienna, **Christoph Schönborn**, the Archbishop of Cologne, **Joachim Meisner**, and many others. Cardinal **Norberto Rivera**, Archbishop of Mexico, said a few days earlier that "for the whole world, but for us Mexicans in particular, this long awaited news brings us a special joy. I am happy also at the way in which Our Lady of Guadalupe has once more brought together Juan Diego and Josemaría Escrivá: two pilgrims of Tepeyac in love with the Virgin. She already brought them together on their way to the altars in 1990, when they were declared venerable on the same day and their heroic virtue was recognised."

*Mgr Flavio Capucci, postulator of the cause of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá, speaking on 26 February at the launch*



*of the book "A saint who is a friend" (a collection of testimonies from various ecclesiastical personalities who met Blessed Josemaría between 1924 and 1946, when he moved to Rome), pointed out that "the personal story of Josemaría Escrivá and of the institution he founded are marked by ecclesial communion, a distinctive characteristic of the lives of the saints." Numerous declarations of love and affection towards the new Saint from sources outside the Prelature confirm this.*

*The President of the Pontifical Institute Regina Mundi, Sr Fernanda Barbiero SMSD, who also spoke at the book launch, referred to the "ecclesial awareness" of the founder of Opus Dei, manifested in his desire "to serve the Church as the Church wants to be served".*

*The Sala Clementina during the Consistory when the date for the canonisation of Josemaría Escrivá was fixed*



# The centenary of Blessed Josemaría's birth

Numerous initiatives around the world

A number of different events are being held in many countries this year to mark the centenary of the birth of the founder of Opus Dei on 9 January 2002. These events all aim to help people reflect on his basic message - seeking holiness in ordinary life. In addition, many Bishops and notable figures from around the world have spoken about Blessed Josemaría and his teachings.



in London in January 2002. After being displayed for several days in Westminster Cathedral the exhibition is travelling to many churches and schools around Britain. Similar exhibitions are being held in Paris, Chicago, Madrid, Hong Kong, Abidjan, and elsewhere.

A critical edition of *The Way* was published in Spain in March. *The Way* is the most widely read of all Blessed Josemaría's works, four and a half million copies in forty languages having been printed to date. Further books on his life and message are coming out soon, and from March a website ([www.Escriváworks.org](http://www.Escriváworks.org)) has been set up with the published works of Blessed Josemaría in several languages.

Study days focusing on the teachings of the founder of Opus Dei have been organised in many cities, including Glasgow, Fatima, Madrid, Tegucigalpa, Zurich, Cologne, Sao Paulo, Helsinki and Santiago de Chile.

To mark the centenary two churches have been dedicated to Blessed Josemaría: one in Barbastro, where he was born, the other in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

## THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Towards the end of 2001 the Institute for Industrial Technology was officially inaugurated in Lagos, Nigeria. This technical college for young people came about as a result of Blessed Josemaría's teachings. Over the next few months, other socially-oriented projects will be opened in memory of the founder of Opus Dei, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Colombia, Venezuela and Spain.

An exhibition of photographs about the life and teachings of Blessed Josemaría was held



## INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON "THE GRANDEUR OF ORDINARY LIFE"

An international congress on "The Grandeur of Ordinary Life" to study the teachings of the founder of Opus Dei was organised in Rome from 7 to 12 January by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. Over 1200 people from 57 countries attended.

In his inaugural speech, Bishop Javier Echevarria recalled the nucleus of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá's message: that holiness is not something reserved for a minority, but is open to all God's children.

The congress featured nine keynote speeches, over a hundred presentations, and eighteen workshops. Speakers included Janne Haaland Matlary, the Norwegian lecturer and politician; Giorgio Rumi, Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Milan; Charles Nyamiti, a Kenyan priest and theologian; Evgeny Pazukhin, Orthodox philosopher and author of the first biography of the founder of Opus Dei in Russian; and the Chief Rabbi Angel Kreiman, International Vice-President of the World



Council of Synagogues.

On the morning of 12 January those attending the congress were received in an audience with the Holy Father in the Paul VI Hall in the Vatican. The Pope recalled how "Blessed Josemaría Escrivá put at the very heart of his preaching the truth that all the baptised are called to the



Some participants in the Congress "The Grandeur of Ordinary Life"

fulness of charity," and said that "the Lord wants to enter into a loving communion with each one of his children, *right in the heart of daily occupations*, in the context of everyday life." He went on to say that "one's everyday activities come to be seen as a valuable means for achieving union with Christ. They become the place and the matter of holiness, the playing field for exercising the virtues, and a dialogue of love that is expressed in deeds." Referring to the years Jesus spent in Nazareth, the Pope added that for every baptised person who "desires to follow Christ faithfully, the factory, the office, the library, the laboratory, the workshop, the home, can be transformed into places for an encounter with the Lord, who chose to live in obscurity for thirty years." The Holy Father explained that "the small events of each day hold, locked within them, an unsuspected greatness. Those actions,



The Holy Father during the audience on 12 January, in the Paul VI Hall

undertaken with the love of God and neighbour, *can overcome at their very roots every division between faith and daily life*. The Second Vatican Council denounced such a division as 'one of the gravest errors of our time.' After his address the Pope personally greeted the congress organisers and the main speakers, as well as about fifty children who were there with their parents.



"The history of the Church and her saints is, in the words of the founder of Opus Dei, the story of 'Christ passing by'. Through Blessed Josemaría and his Work, Christ is passing by once more in our times." **Cardinal Antonio María Rouco, Archbishop of Madrid**

"Today is a feast for the Church. It's the feast of the charism of lay people because the proclamation of the holiness of Escrivá is the recognition of the role of the laity in the Church. I believe that for lay piety and lay spirituality two great saints should be remembered: Francis de Sales, the first one to think of writing a book of prayers for lay people, and Josemaría Escrivá, the great apostle of the laity." **Francesco Cossiga, former President of Italy**

"Josemaría Escrivá dedicated himself to the Work of God ... with an exemplary abnegation and a true sense of ecclesial modernity. He did this along the old ways, which are always new, of humility and love, helping those most in need." **Antonio Ramalho Eanes, former President of Portugal**



"Beatifications and canonisations mean a deprivatisation of the person, who belongs from then on to the common heritage of the Church. Blessed Josemaría is and will always be the founder of Opus Dei. But he belongs to all of us in the Church." **Cardinal Meisner, Archbishop of Cologne**

"Blessed Josemaría was a man anchored in the love of the Lord and therefore able to be steady in the midst of great crises." **Cardinal Francis George, Archbishop of Chicago**

"I read in the homilies of Blessed Josemaría: there is only one race, the race of the children of God. In our Guatemala which we call multiethnic and multilingual - because that's what it is - it's very good for us to hear the clear message of a holy priest who preached in that way."



**Rosalina Tuyuc, Member of Parliament in Guatemala**

"God's Providence allowed me to celebrate this Mass ten years ago, on the occasion of the beatification of Josemaría Escrivá, and today it has made it possible for me to celebrate his forthcoming canonisation with all of you." **Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris**



"The spirit to which Blessed Josemaría has given witness is a firm reference point from which to set out effectively on the paths of the third millennium." **Cardinal Camillo Ruini, Vicar of the Pope for the diocese of Rome**

"From the moment I discovered this little book (The Way), I have often used it in my prayer. It's not just a guide to reach the heights of Christian spirituality, it's also a guide on how Christians should love our Mother the Church." **Cardinal Shan, Bishop of Kaohsiung, Taiwan**





# A School for the Centenary

The IIT is located in Lagos (Nigeria).  
Eugene Agboifo Ofu interviews the administrative  
director, Darlington Agholor



*Nigeria, like many other African countries, is in great need of basic technical education*

**T**he Institute for Industrial Technology (IIT) is a social project in Nigeria dedicated to teaching technical skills and ethical values to recent high school graduates and workers from underprivileged sectors of society. In Nigeria, a country with an estimated population of 120 million, the majority of inhabitants live below the poverty level. Even as the national unemployment rate approaches 60%, IIT aims to give an excellent training to members of all tribes and religions that will render them highly qualified for the modern workplace.

## WHOSE IDEA WAS THIS PROJECT?

Like many similar projects all over the world, this social work springs from the impetus of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá, founder of Opus Dei. He had a keen interest in helping the less privileged members of society improve their condition and increase their ability to obtain the resources they need to live a more dignified existence. We learned from his deep Christian charity, which led him to see in each person a true child of God. He firmly taught: "Nobody is better than the others, not one of us! We are all equal! Each of us is worth the exact same - the blood of Christ!"

He urged us, as he did those in other countries, to join with other citizens of good will to start up a vocational school which would impart technical skills and a Christian formation to as many people as possible in this marvellous country. Opening our doors on 27 March 2000 to our first 10 apprentices signalled a humble beginning in our pursuit of this ambitious dream. 9 January 2002 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Blessed Josemaría. This school is a centennial birthday present, a fitting gesture to express our appreciation for his having bequeathed to us the spirit of Opus Dei, seeking holiness



*Some students of IIT*

*"Nobody is better than the others, not one of us! We are all equal! Each of us is worth the exact same - the blood of Christ!" With these words, Blessed Josemaría urged his children to undertake social projects*



*Surroundings of the school*



through daily work. His legacy is incalculable, so whatever we do to show our gratitude will fall far short. We ardently hope that the work of this school will continue through the years as an enduring testimony of our gratitude and devotion to Blessed Escrivá.

## WHAT TYPE OF METHOD DO YOU USE AT IIT?

We utilise a work-study system that has been tried out in Germany and the Philippines. The students carry out their apprenticeship concurrently in two locations, the school and the workshop. The school provides a basic general education that includes cultural, social, spiritual, and technical dimensions, while the workshop offers a more specific experience of work, including contributing as part of a team. The school has three types of programmes, including a 3-year electro-





mechanical major for recent school graduates between the ages of 18 and 21. There is also a similar 2-year programme for those who already have work experience.



Finally, we offer a variety of mini-courses that update previously acquired skills. We prepare our students to be well-rounded technicians capable of developing more fully a variety of skills in the areas of electricity and electronics, mechanics, and automation. As the school grows, the content of the courses will be expanded.

#### WHAT IS THE PRESENT STATUS OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA?

Nigeria has never given a proper priority to technical education as a principal axis of the economy, as various government spokesmen have recently observed. Countries such as Germany were able to recover from the Second World War because of the attention they paid to technical education. We in this country have looked down on manual skills for so long that many of us now assume that a university is the only worthwhile educational option. Our workforce has been hurt by this prevailing attitude, found even

within the few technical schools established by the government. The result is a large pool of poorly educated, poorly motivated graduates badly equipped to put unemployment behind them. At present, when Nigerian industries hire graduates of technical schools, they still have to provide them with

*Many projects similar to IIT are also undertaken in other countries. Here we teach love for work in addition to technology, says Darlington Agholor*



their own intensive training to assure proficiency. Since they do not have the capacity to train large numbers of students, the majority of the graduates remain unemployed. The individual companies do not have an interest in creating what would amount to an in-house technical school because this would distract from their focus on their primary business. The required commitment and investment is just not there. Thus IIT fills a need not only for individual students but also for industry as a whole.

#### WHAT HAS BEEN THE REACTION OF LOCAL INDUSTRIES?

Local companies have been very receptive from the beginning. The most important help up to this point has come from Carnaud Metal Box (CMB), who lease us the buildings. After several rounds of discussions, we reached an agreement in May 1999 with the management of the company to rent their former vocational school on the grounds of their factory in the Ogba Industrial Estate in

Ikeja. Moreover, they donated some lathes and other equipment to help us get started. Other firms have also donated machines to facilitate the instruction of students. Experts from the industrial world visit IIT almost daily to acquaint themselves personally with the school, and all of them leave with great hope, enthusiasm, and words of praise.





# Living by faith

Extracts from a homily given by Blessed Josemaría on 12 October 1947

**Y**ou hear people saying sometimes that there are fewer miracles nowadays. Might it not rather be that there are fewer people living a life of faith? God cannot go back on his promise: "Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession."

Consider chapter nine of St John. "And Jesus saw, as he passed on his way, a man who had been blind from birth." Our Lord "spat on the ground, and made clay with the spittle. Then he spread the clay on the man's eyes, and said to him, Go and wash in the pool of Siloe (a name that means, Sent). So he went and washed there, and came back with his sight restored."

What an example of firm faith the blind man gives us! A living, operative faith. Do you behave like this when God commands, when so often you can't see, when your soul is worried and the light is gone? What power could the water possibly contain that when the blind man's eyes were moistened with it they were cured? Surely some mysterious eye salve, or a precious medicine made up in the laboratory of some wise alchemist, would have done better? But the man believed; he acted upon the command of God, and he returned with eyes full of light.

This is the way we Christians must travel. We have to cry out ceaselessly with a strong and humble faith,

"Lord, put not your trust in me. But I, I put my trust in you." Then, as we sense in our hearts the love, the compassion, the tenderness of Christ's gaze upon us, for he never abandons us, we shall come to understand the full meaning of those words of St Paul, *virtus in infirmitate perficitur* (power is made perfect in weakness). If we have faith in Our Lord, in spite of our failings - or, rather, with our failings - we shall be faithful to our Father, God; his divine power will shine forth in us, sustaining us in our weakness.

If we turn now to St Mark we will find he tells us about another blind man being cured. As Jesus "was leaving Jericho, with his disciples and a great multitude, Bartimaeus, the blind man, Timaeus' son, was sitting there by the wayside, begging." Hearing the commotion the crowd was making, the blind man asked, "What is happening?" They told him, "It is Jesus of Nazareth." At this his soul was so fired with faith in Christ that he cried out, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me."

Don't you too feel the same urge to cry out? You who also are waiting at the side of the way, of this highway of life that is so very short? You who need more light, you who need more grace to make up your mind to seek holiness? Don't you feel an urgent need to cry out, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me"? What a beautiful aspiration for you to repeat again and again!

"And Jesus stopped, and told them to call him." And now begins a dialogue with God, a marvellous dialogue that moves us and sets our hearts on fire, for you and I are now Bartimaeus. Christ, who is God, begins to speak and asks, *Quid tibi vis faciam?* "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man answers, "Lord, that I may see." How utterly logical! How about yourself, can you really see? Haven't you too experienced at times what happened to the blind man of Jericho? I can never forget how, when meditating on this passage many years back, and realising that Jesus was expecting something of me, though I myself did not know what it was, I made up my own aspirations: "Lord, what is it you want? What are you asking of me?" I had a feeling that he wanted me to take on something new and the cry, *Rabboni, ut videam*, "Master, that I may see," moved me to beseech Christ again and again, "Lord, whatever it is that you wish, let it be done."

Now it is St Matthew who tells us about a most touching episode. "And behold a woman who for twelve years had been troubled with an issue of blood, came up behind him and touched the hem of his cloak." What great humility she shows! "She said to herself, 'If only I can touch the hem of his garment, I shall be healed.'" There are always sick people who, like Bartimaeus, pray with great faith and have no qualms about confessing their faith at the top of their voices. But notice how, among those whom Christ encounters, no two souls are alike. This woman, too, has great faith, but she does not cry aloud; she draws near to Jesus without anyone even noticing. For her it

is enough just to touch his garment, because she is quite certain she will be cured. No sooner has she done so than Our Lord turns round and looks at her. He already knows what is going on in the depths of her heart and has seen how sure she is: "Have no fear, my daughter, your faith has saved you."

Do you see now how our faith must be? It must be humble. Who are you, and who am I, to deserve to be called in this way by Christ? Who are we, to be so close to him? As with that poor woman in the crowd, he has given us an opportunity. And not just to touch his garment a little, to feel for a moment the fringe, the hem of his cloak. We actually have Christ himself. He gives himself to us totally, with his Body, his Blood, his Soul and his Divinity. We eat him each day. We speak to him intimately as one does to a father, as one speaks to Love itself. And all this is true. It is no fantasy.

Let us try to become more humble. For only a truly humble faith will allow us to see things from a supernatural point of view. We have no other alternative. There are only two possible ways of living on this earth: either we live a supernatural life, or else an animal life. And you and I can only live the life of God, a supernatural life. "For what does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and suffers the loss of his own soul?" What use to man are all the things of the earth, all that our intelligence and will can aspire to? What is the point of all that, if it is all to come to an end and sink out of sight; if all the riches of this world are mere theatre props and scenery, and if after all this there is eternity for ever, and ever, and ever?



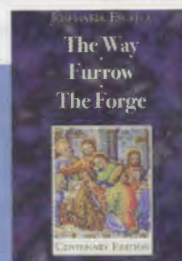
Critical Edition of "Camino" ("The Way"), 2002



CD with the life and works of Josemaría Escrivá, 2002



CTS Booklet, London 2001



Combined edition of "The Way", "Furrow" and "The Forge"



What is Opus Dei?, Revised Edition, 2001



Dei in different countries, under the inspiration of Blessed Josemaría



CTS Booklet, London 2001



# Does it Work?

A documentary on the sanctification of daily work



Peter Green



Alexandra Loewe



Prof. John Henry

Speaking to a group of people in Barcelona in November 1972, Blessed Josemaría referred to the main aspect of the spirit of Opus Dei: "Opus Dei has come to turn work into prayer, to sanctify work, to enable us to sanctify ourselves with our work, and sanctify others with our work."

"Does it Work?", produced in Britain, shows the impact which the message of Blessed Josemaría about the sanctification of work has made on the daily lives of different people.

The first requirement for work to be sanctified is that it should be carried out as well as possible. So explains Professor John Henry, who heads the Accident and Emergency Unit in St Mary's Hospital in London. "You tell God: This is for You! But in the wake of that, there's a whole series of consequences. We have to do that work as well as we possibly can, controlling our emotions, our tiredness, our impatience, hunger, whatever it is ... You have to know the job thoroughly. You have to be up to date. There's no point in doing something well if that's the way they did it 25 years ago."

Mae Parreno is an educationalist who runs *Baytree*, a daring social initiative for women in Brixton, a deprived area in South London. "In Brixton we have a mixture of different cultures," she explains, "and many find themselves hopeless, either trapped on benefits or unable to find jobs ... Most of them are wounded in one way or another." She says that the spirit of Blessed Josemaría helps her a lot in her work by teaching her that she should try to do everything for God. Trying to sanctify his work has taught Peter Green the value which ordinary life has in the eyes of God. Peter is an electrician. His work could be considered monotonous if looked at in a purely

from Blessed Josemaría Escrivá

*"Seek God in everything. God is hidden in the most simple, ordinary, everyday things. We foolishly try to find God in strange things, which will never happen, but He is in this life of ours, in each of our lives, in my life, right here and now."*

Chile, 1974

human way. "I was thinking about Our Lord and the thirty years of hidden life ... He was living an ordinary life, and He learnt a trade, of the carpenter, because He had to feed Himself and His Mother, and He had all the same sort of responsibilities as I've got ... I've got the best example in the world in Our Lord."

Alexandra Loewe is a professional singer. In the spirit of Blessed Josemaría she has found that all jobs are equally worthy in the eyes of God. "Scrubbing a pot is as worthwhile as singing a cantata, as giving a class," she explains. "Each has the same worth, because it's the love that you do it with that counts."

People of all professions can live this spirit, says Rosemary Roscoe, a journalist. "I feel very much in tune with what Blessed Josemaría says, that however busy we are - and as journalists sticking to very busy deadlines, we work with great intensity, and obviously the essence of meeting deadlines is working with speed and accuracy - there's still time to offer it up to God, to think of God right there beside you, really helping you to do your level best."

This message works well for working mothers. In the words of Anne Archibald, a consultant dermatologist with five children, "The time I'm at home is of equal importance as the time I'm in the hospital. And I think it also helps me to see my work on a grander scale."

"How you prepare for your work, how you offer your work up, how you offer any inconvenience up, anything that's disturbing you," says Tommy Burns, former player, and later manager, of

Glasgow Celtic FC, "offering up time to spend with people you don't really want to, washing the dishes when it's your turn or not your turn... you get up and offer it up - there's just so many different things that can make your whole life into a prayer." Working in the intense pressure of Premier Division football, Tommy Burns, like so many others all over the world, found inspiration in the teachings of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá.

from Blessed Josemaría Escrivá

*"Men will always work - that's a command from God. Before Adam's fall, Genesis tells us that man was created to work. And Opus Dei has come to turn work into prayer, to sanctify our work, to sanctify ourselves with our work, and to sanctify others with our work. If we are humble, and if we keep our eyes fixed on our goal, and if we are contemplatives in the middle of the street, and in the factory, and at the university, and on the farm, and at home, everything will be well."*

Spain 1972



This video can be ordered from  
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# Finding work

I have prayed daily for Blessed Josemaría's intercession before God to obtain "guidance in my career" and latterly for "a good job".

My last job obliged me to stay away from home regularly and work long unpredictable hours with quite a low salary for my responsibilities and education. I took a risk several months ago of leaving that job to study for a better one, and two months ago I was offered a position with excellent prospects and flexible hours. I didn't have a pension but now I work for a pension company. It could not have come at a more opportune time as we had begun to run out of time and money and my wife found out she was expecting a third child in four years of marriage. We will now be able to move to better accommodation than our two bedroom flat which is up two flights of stairs.

*Glasgow, Scotland*

## IT BECAME WELL AGAIN WITH MY FAMILY

One day I came across a newsletter of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei. Something told me to read its contents; and, after reading it, I was filled with satisfaction about the holy life of this servant of God, his works of mercy, his tireless sacrifice and mostly his miracles. I admired him and picked interest in knowing more of him so as to help me grow higher in faith and trust in God. And since it is written in the Scripture that "Blessed are those who

*Out of the many letters we have received, we publish here accounts of favours coming from Africa, America and Europe.*

have not seen and yet believed" I also believed in the power of his intercession. Two days after my encounter with Blessed Josemaría Escrivá, I, my mum and our little house-help were praying because we were in great difficulties. After praying and singing songs and praises, the wonderful works of Blessed Josemaría occurred to me; and while I consoled my mother I told the stories of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá. She accepted the whole truth with faith immediately. We then knelt down and prayed to God, laying down all our problems through the intercession of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá, to rescue us from our difficulties.

I am happy today to proclaim the goodness of the Lord that we have resolved half of the problems. It is already well with my family.

*Owerri, Nigeria*

## A TWENTY-FIVE FOOT FALL

I took my whole family on a pilgrimage to the Marian shrine of Montserrat. We attended Mass, and afterwards went out for dinner. The

children were playing outside when all of a sudden we heard a dull thud and a child's wailing. We saw people running to the scene and were told that a youngster had taken a nasty fall. It turned out to be my 11-year old son Marc.

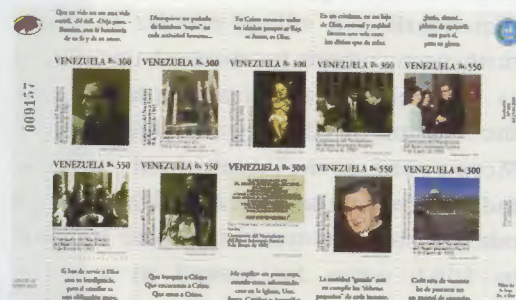
We could see where he had fallen from about three storeys above us, but not where he had landed. I froze at first, absolutely paralysed, since I thought he must be badly injured. Then immediately I prayed to Blessed Josemaría. Marc was taken directly by helicopter to a hospital in Barcelona. By the time we arrived there they told us that he had not broken anything, but would be admitted for observation. His condition gradually improved for four days, at which time they released him. He didn't even have a scratch or bruise, much to the surprise of the doctors. Without a doubt, I know that Blessed Josemaría interceded before God so that my son would come out unharmed. Many thanks!

*Barcelona, Spain*

## CONFRONTING A HIGH CALIBRE WEAPON

At 8.40 pm I began my shift in my taxi and started looking for passengers, after praying for my loved ones as well as for my own safety, using a prayer card of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá that I have. At approximately 12.40am a well-groomed young man hailed me. He got into the cab, and after we turned the corner he pulled out a high calibre weapon and instructed me to cooperate or else he would kill me. In those moments the only thing I did was to pray and ask God that this man would not kill me. Later, six individuals climbed into the cab and told me to take them to an address. I did not cease praying and asking the Monsignor that these men would take pity on me and let me go. After two and a half hours one of them told me to drive away before he changed his mind. At the end of the odyssey, I give thanks to Blessed Josemaría for this miracle.

*Guayaquil, Ecuador*



*Stamps issued in Venezuela on the occasion of the centenary*

*We would like to express our thanks for the many letters we receive. They are a witness to the devotion of very many people who, in all parts of the world, pray to God through the intercession of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá. In this Newsletter, for reasons of space, we can only print paragraphs from some of them, which report significant events or simple episodes from ordinary life.*

*Since it is impossible for us to thank everyone by name, we would also like to express our thanks here for the donations people send us to help cover the costs of producing and distributing this Newsletter and contribute towards the development of apostolic projects which take their inspiration from Blessed Josemaría's love for souls.*



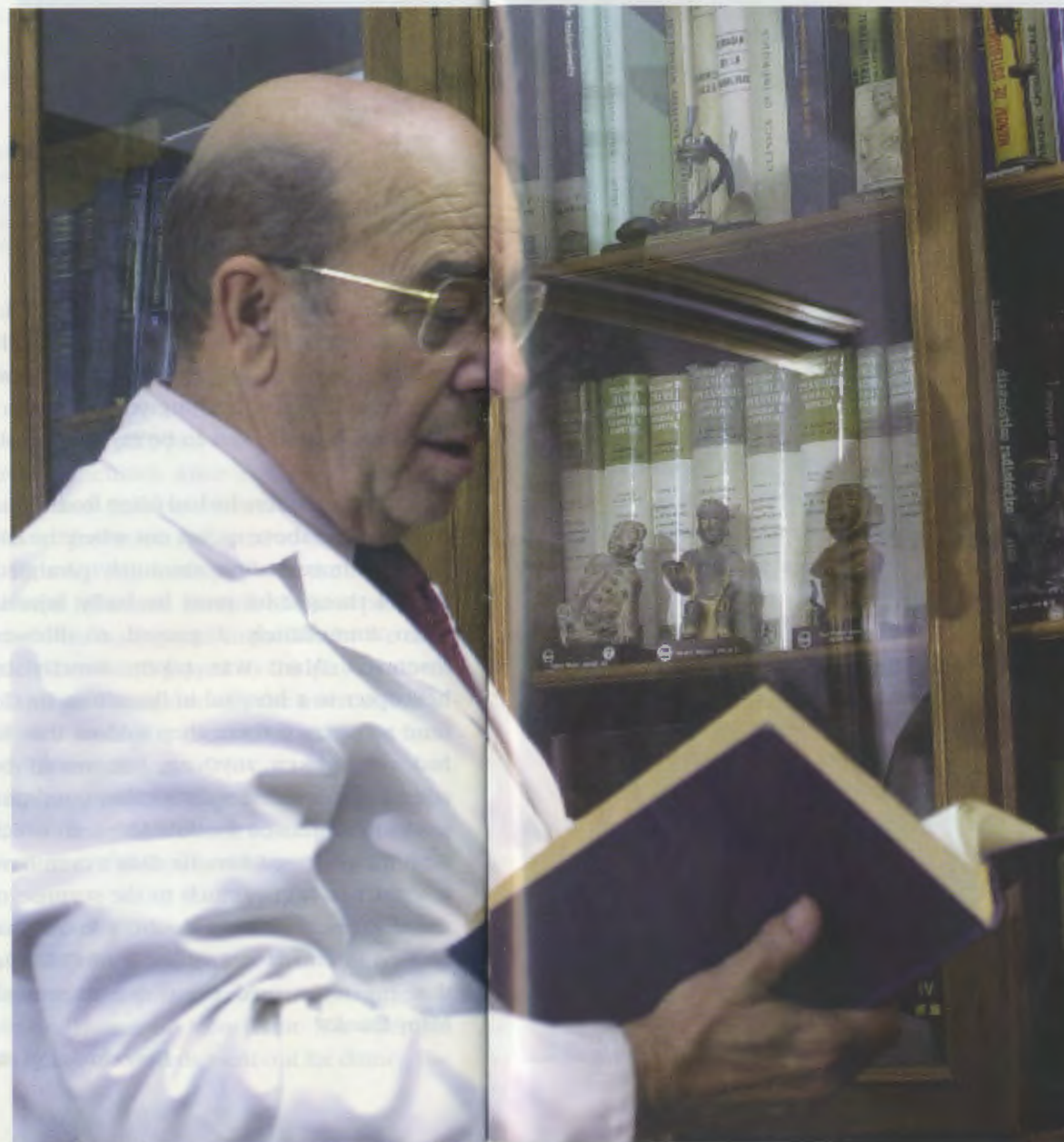
# The hands of a surgeon

Cured from chronic cancerous radiodermatitis

**M**anuel Nevado was born in 1932 in Cáceres in the south west of Spain. He studied medicine at the University of Salamanca, in northern Spain, where he graduated in 1955. That same year he began his specialisation in General Surgery and Traumatology at a prestigious hospital in Santander, and he started using the Siemens X-ray tube for diagnosing and setting bone fractures. During the following years he carried out all kinds of operations in general surgery and traumatology. In 1962 he moved to Almendralejo, a village not far from his birthplace, where he worked until 1980 as Medical Director at a hospital run by the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy. There he continued to use radioscopy in the operations he carried out. He stopped working at the hospital in 1982, when he moved to a Social Security hospital in a nearby town.

## HE CONTRACTS THE DISEASE AT WORK

The first signs of chronic radiodermatitis appeared in 1962. His wife remembers very well how at that time the first symptoms of the disease were beginning to show themselves. The backs of his fingers had lost their hair and the skin on his hands had developed red patches and black spots, especially on the middle fingers of the left hand.



The wounds on the hands grew worse with the years, displaying the symptoms characteristic of the second phase of the disease: rashes, abnormally thickened patches of skin, and warts and ulcers of different sizes. The problem became so acute that in 1984 or 1985 he had to cease

performing major surgery, and could only carry out minor operations that did not involve the meticulous cleansing required in an operating theatre. Even so, by 1992 he had to stop even these, because of the condition of his hands.

The professionals in the field who have studied the case, including Dr Nevado himself, are agreed that by 1992 the illness had become cancerous. The radiodermatitis had entered its third phase.

## DR NEVADO IS CURED

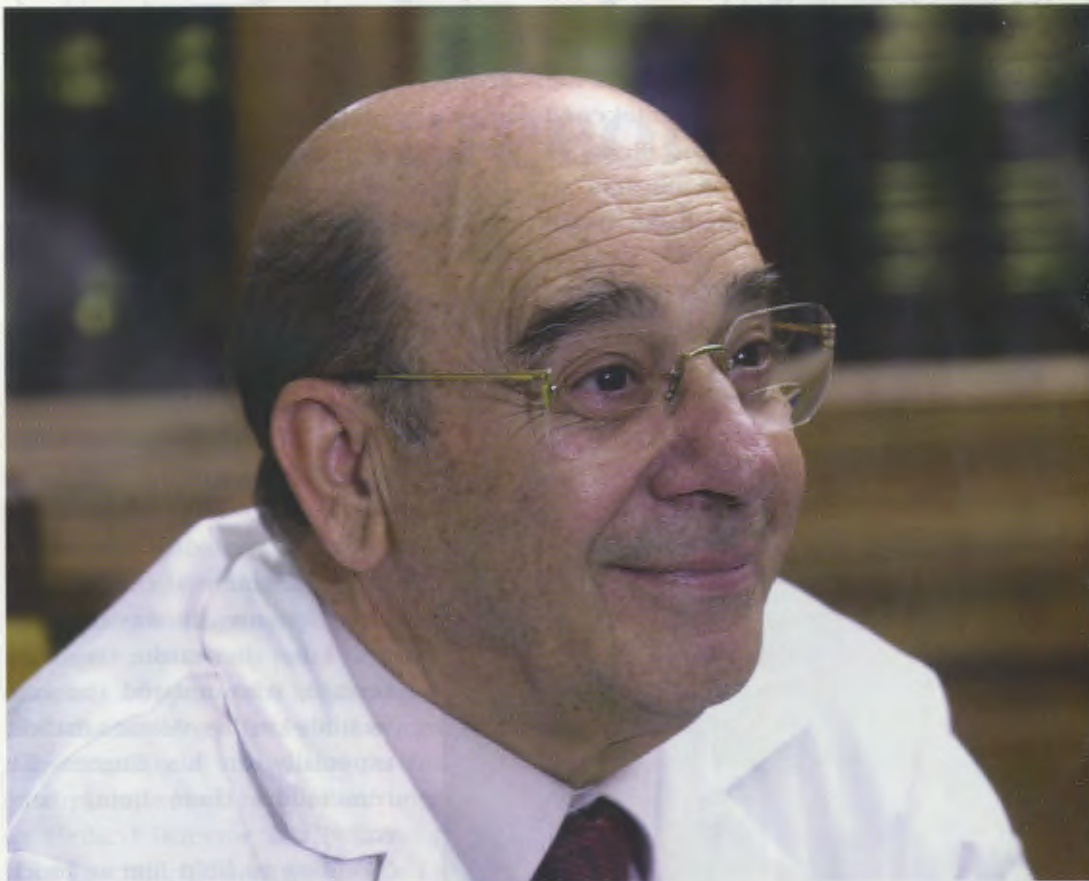
At the beginning of 1992, Dr Nevado travelled to Madrid for an appointment at the Ministry of Agriculture. He was received by Luis Bernardo, a civil servant, who noticed the raw wounds on his visitor's hands, especially on his fingers. He remembers them being very red.

"Wanting to help him as much as I could," says Bernardo, "I offered him a prayer-card of Blessed Josemaría, the founder of Opus Dei, who had been beatified some months earlier, and I suggested he put himself under his protection and entrust him with the cure of his hands."

Dr Nevado, amid a mixture of surprise and gratitude, started asking for the grace of his cure through the intercession of Blessed Josemaría. "Since the

*Doctor Nevado in his practice*





day I was given the card," he explains, "from the moment I placed myself under the intercession of Blessed Josemaría, the hands started to improve, and in about two weeks all the wounds had disappeared - they were as they are now, completely cured."

#### A PERFECT AND LASTING CURE ENABLES DR NEVADO TO GO BACK TO WORK

The cure was so complete that Dr Nevado was able to return to work once more, to his great delight, and practise the profession he had been obliged to abandon. As he says in his testimony, "I

The hands of Doctor Nevado after his cure



have put down here exactly how my radiodermatitis was cured. I was very much afraid that a metastasis might develop, in which case the prognosis could have been extremely serious. But that did not happen. Quite simply, the radiodermatitis has been cured, and I can only attribute it to the intercession of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá."

After studying the testimonies of the witnesses and all the supporting documentation, the Medical Committee of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints unanimously acknowledged on 10 July 1997 that the cure was complete and permanent, and that there had been a true *restitutio ad integrum*, that is, there had been regeneration of healthy tissue where previously there had been damaged and cancerous skin. There is no similar instance of such an occurrence in medical history.

On 9 January 1998, the Theological Consultors of the Congregation were asked to pronounce on the preternatural character of the cure and on the causal relationship between the invoking of Blessed Josemaría Escrivá and the disappearance of the disease. They gave a unanimous positive opinion.

The Ordinary Congregation of Cardinal and Bishop members of the Congregation, on 21 September 2001, unanimously confirmed the miraculous nature of the cure of Dr Nevado, and that it was attributable to Blessed Josemaría Escrivá.

The reading of the corresponding decree relating to the miracle took place on 20 December 2001 in the presence of the Pope.

## TESTIMONY: Cardinal Franz König



Cardinal Franz König, archbishop emeritus of Vienna

*"Escrivá is now part of the treasure of the Church. I met the Blessed Escrivá in Rome during the Second Vatican Council. I had heard that he was promoting the role of the laity in daily life, in the professions, to enable the Church to act in the world through lay people, without clerical collars and episcopal sashes. He was a man who, as I see it, exuded great magnanimity. He took an interest in the Council, and I discovered that he travelled a lot and that he was interested in the apostolate of the laity. He spoke at length about what was going on all around the world, and I very quickly realised that there before me was a living Church."*

*La Vanguardia (Barcelona, Spain), 21 December 2001*