



PRAYER

O God, merciful Father,
you granted your servant Bishop Alvaro,
the grace of being an exemplary pastor
in the service of the Church and a most faithful son and successor
of St. Josemaría, the Founder of Opus Dei.
Grant that I may also respond faithfully
to the demands of the Christian vocation,
turning all the circumstances and events
of my life into opportunities to love you
and serve the kingdom of Jesus Christ.
Deign to glorify your servant Alvaro
and through his intercession grant me the favor I request ...
(Here, make your petition). Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

In conformity with the decree 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.

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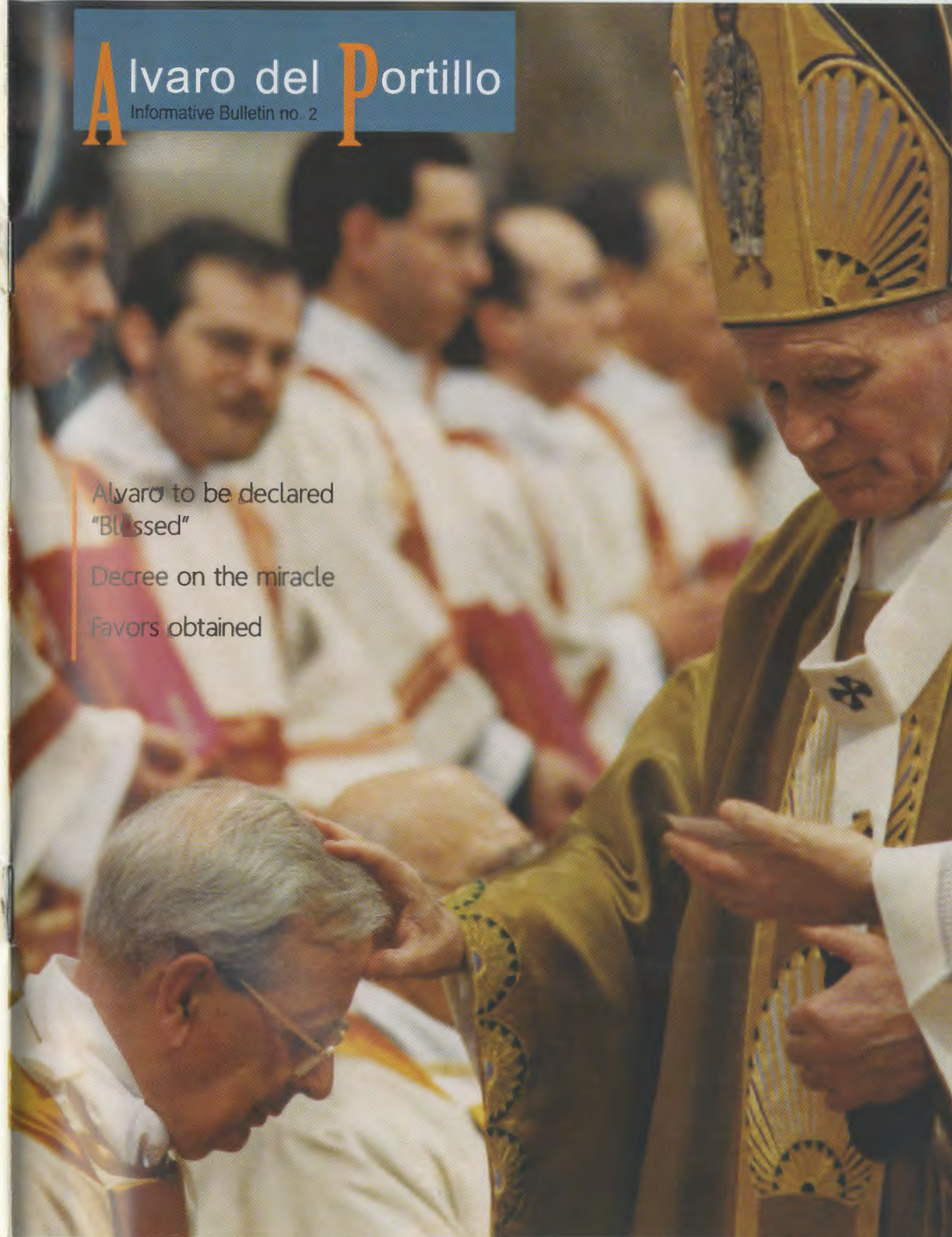
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Most Rev. Javier Echevarría,
Prelate of Opus Dei.

Alvaro del Portillo

Informative Bulletin no. 2

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Bishop Alvaro del Portillo was born in Madrid, Spain, on March 11, 1914. He was a civil engineer and also held doctorates in philosophy and canon law. On June 25, 1944, he was ordained a priest. Two years later, he moved to Rome, where he worked directly with St. Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei. His service to the Church was also shown in his dedicated work in tasks entrusted to him by the Holy See and especially in his active participation in the work of the Second Vatican Council. In 1975, after the death of St. Josemaría, he was elected to succeed him as head of Opus Dei. On January 6, 1991, John Paul II ordained him as bishop. His pastoral work was characterized by fidelity to the spirit of Opus Dei's founder and by zeal in extending the apostolates of the Prelature and the call to holiness in ordinary life throughout the world. On the morning of March 23, 1994, a few hours after returning from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, our Lord called to himself this good and faithful servant of his. That same day, John Paul II went to pray before his mortal remains, which now repose in the crypt of the Prelatic Church of Our Lady of Peace, in Rome. On June 28, 2012, Benedict XVI approved the decree on the Christian virtues lived to a heroic degree by Venerable Alvaro, and on July 7, 2013 Pope Francis signed the decree approving the miracle attributed to him, the prior step to his beatification.



Editorial

E DITORIAL

From the Bishop Prelate of Opus Dei, Javier Echevarría:

The announcement of the forthcoming canonizations of Blessed John Paul II and Blessed John XXIII, and the future beatification of Venerable Alvaro del Portillo is a happy coincidence and a cause of deep joy. We should be profoundly grateful to God for Pope Francis' decision. Bishop Alvaro del Portillo was Saint Josemaría's best support, and a most faithful collaborator of John Paul II. Many churchmen and lay people from all over the world have told me how much good this faithful priest did to them. And they all agree in this: that it was easy for them to love him, to trust his advice, because they sensed his sincere and priestly interest for their souls.

Earlier, the Church referred to Bishop Alvaro del Portillo as a "profoundly good and amiable man, able to transmit peace and serenity to souls." At this time of joy, I turn to the intercession of this good and faithful servant, and I ask him to "infect" us with his loyalty to God, the Church, the Pope, Saint Josemaría, and to his friends. I ask him to win for us a share in his social concern, which was shown in the many initiatives around the world for people in need, which he encouraged. I ask that he may transmit to us his special love for the family and his passionate love for the priesthood, as well as his tender and simple piety, which had such a Marian flavour.



- London, 1959. Alvaro with St Josemaría and the architect Jesus Álvarez Gazapo
- Rome, 1983. With Blessed John Paul II and now-Bishop Prelate Javier Echevarría
- Manila, 1987. With Jaime Cardinal Sin and Msgr. Bruno Torpigliani, the then Papal Nuncio to the Philippines

CONGREGATION FOR THE CAUSES OF THE SAINTS

ROME

AND THE PERSONAL PRELATURE OF THE HOLY CROSS AND OPUS DEI
BEATIFICATION AND CANONIZATION
OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

ALVARO DEL PORTILLO Y DIEZ DE SOLLANO

TITULAR BISHOP OF VITA

PRELATE OF THE PERSONAL PRELATURE OF THE HOLY CROSS AND OPUS DEI
(1914 - 1994)

D ECREE ON THE MIRACLE

The Venerable Servant of God, Alvaro del Portillo y Diez de Sollano was born in Madrid on 11 March 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 25 June 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 15 September 1975, he was elected the first successor of Saint Josemaría at the head of Opus Dei. On 28 November 1982, Blessed John Paul II erected Opus Dei as a Personal Prelature and named the Venerable Alvaro del Portillo Prelate. On 6 January 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 23 March 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 favours stand out, along with many cures attributed to his intercession. Especially worthy of consideration is the cure of an infant born on 10 July 2003 with congenital (bilateral) cerebral malformation, cyanotic heart disease (Tetralogy of Fallot) and an omphalocoele. During his first few days of life, the infant suffered repeated hypoxic-ischaemic cerebral lesions, and on 2 August he went into cardiac arrest for between thirty to forty-five minutes

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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 Alvaro 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 5 August 2008 and 6 August 2009. On 15 January 2010, this Congregation decreed the juridical validity of that process. On 18 October 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 15 December 2012, and the Ordinary Session of Cardinals and Bishops on 4 June 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, 5 July 2013: The proofs of the miracle performed by God through the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God, Alvaro del Portillo y Diez 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



- Alvaro with his parents and siblings in 1921.
- In a recent get-together with the Bishop Prelate of Opus Dei in Chile, August 2013: the cure of the boy in the middle, Jose Ignacio (in 2003) attributed to the intercession of Don Alvaro was the miracle that paved the way for the beatification.

F AVORS FROM BISHOP ALVARO

THE DIFFICULT TIMES

Last year, an Informative Bulletin on Alvaro del Portillo arrived in the house of my in-laws. We were going through financial problems. These were long years of looking for work, with four children to take care of.

I read the Bulletin and started praying for my spouse and for all in the family. With my eldest daughter, I prepared a curriculum vitae of my husband without him knowing, and submitted it to a certain office. To our surprise, he was accepted the day after!

I also started to pray for the health of my eldest daughter. In the tests, everything went well despite the previous suspicion to the contrary. That Bishop Alvaro chose to help us in the worst moment of our lives is indeed a miracle. Thanks for the job for my husband and the good health of my daughter, Bishop Alvaro.

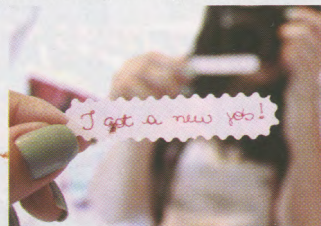
- C.G. (Paraguay)

A NEW JOB

My husband lost his job in December 2011 and, for months; he was having difficulty looking for a new one. I started praying the prayer card of Bishop Alvaro particularly during the week of June 10 to 14. I prayed 9 prayer cards a day.

In August, my husband started with his new job. Not only did our Lord grant my request for him to find work soon, he was also blessed to get the same rank and salary in his new company. Thank you to our Lord and to Bishop Alvaro who interceded for us.

- M.D.G.



I have in my mind an unforgettable image of Alvaro going to the orphanage carrying in his arms one of those poor kids through the streets of Madrid. - **Manuel Pérez** (a university colleague who witnessed Alvaro help four children whose parents were detained by the police)

THE BAPTISM OF MY COUSINS

I have four cousins who were preparing for adult Baptism during the Easter Vigil. However, when the day was about to arrive, my uncle—their father and the real decision-maker of this traditional Chinese family—due to lack of knowledge of the faith, suddenly did not agree with the plan. This was a hard blow for my cousins. Also, the baptism in that Vigil during the Year of the Faith was supposed to be a very good catechetical opportunity for the Parish. They called me for advice. After our conversation, I prayed to Bishop Alvaro everyday as the day approached. A few days before the Holy Week, my uncle had a change of heart and finally agreed. The whole rite went very well and they were very happy.

- M.H.C. (Manila)



FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL

Early this year, I encountered a problem that affected my studies so much. I was told by my aunt who is presently supporting my studies that she can no longer finance me the next school year. I told this to the chaplain of the school and asked for his prayers. I was advised to pray through Bishop Alvaro. From then on I prayed with faith and devotion until one day I received the news that my two brothers were able to find a job. And the best thing about it is that they promised to support me until I finish.

- E.B. (Laguna)

He was one of the brightest students in the School and, at the same time, a person who was approachable, simple; very intelligent, cheerful, cultured, fun, amiable and above all—this is what called my attention—deeply humble, with an extraordinary humility that always left its mark. - **Ángel Vegas** (a colleague of Alvaro in the University)

I KEPT MY VISION

Twelve years ago, I was diagnosed with a choroidalneovascular membrane in the retina of my right eye. I received focal laser treatment that resulted in a corresponding loss of part of my central vision.

A few months later, the lesion recurred. That time I received photodynamic therapy (PDT) which was the latest treatment modality available for my retinal problem. I received repeated PDT for the succeeding episodes of recurrence. Recently, my treatment has shifted to the intraocular injections of VEGFs (vascular endothelial growth factor). In spite of this I continued to lose vision, and now have less than 15-20% vision remaining in my right eye.

Last April 2, Saturday, I noticed a small grey shadow in my other eye. I went to my ophthalmologist on the following Monday and was diagnosed a new choroidalneovascular membrane which already was covering a good portion of the left inferior quadrant and I noticed it visibly darker.

There was no available slot in the operating room for that week and I was given an appointment for the following Tuesday, on the 12th. On Monday 11, that stain covered the entire quadrant and it was not translucent.

At this point, considering this dramatic development and with the experience of the right eye, I decided to start to be ready to manage the best I could with the residual vision on the right eye, as long as it would last, and placed myself in God's hands if he wanted me to serve him without vision or almost without it. A friend of mine gave me a prayer card of Bishop Alvaro with a relic from the clothes he used, and from then on, my wife and I started a continuous "novena" asking his intercession so that, if it was God's will, either I could keep some of the vision in my left eye or a delay of the uncontrolled process could happen.

On the 12th I had another VEGF injection and starting the following day I noticed a considerable improvement, since the stain had disappeared, though I had the vision somehow deformed in the quadrant affected.

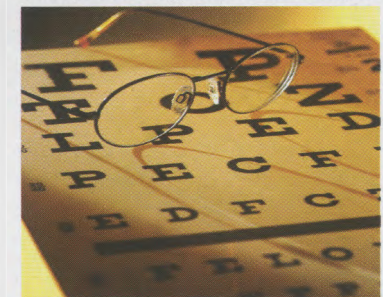
After ten days, when the medication had its optimal action, I was supposed to have a new check up and get the schedule for the second

injection (the minimal treatment is to have 3 injections). The ophthalmologist was able to see clearly that the hemorrhage had disappeared, though the retina was still a little deformed. Thus, she decided to wait for the second injection. A few days later, I had recovered the vision completely, as I had it before the incident.

During the second check up, the ophthalmologist was pleasantly surprised since the retina was absolutely flat, without any scars of the membrane and I had improved visual sharpness in relation to my previous situation. She abandoned the idea of continuing with the treatment and gave me an appointment one month later just for a follow up check up.

My experience with the right eye is that a membrane of this type needs at least 3 injections to dry up, and that I never recovered completely what I lost and that the sharpness in the vision falls notably.

In short, a lesion that appeared terribly aggressive had eased completely just with one injection and so far, my left eye has improved after receiving another VEGF injection and showed no signs of activity after treatment and it recovered the 100% of what it had lost, and even more, I have regained visual sharpness in relation



to the previous one: I had 0,8, and now I have 1. I thank God continually, since I am convinced that through

the intercession of Bishop Alvaro, and with the support of medical science, I received more than what I reasonably could expect. My wife and I pray that the improvement continues through the intercession of Bishop Alvaro, placing ourselves completely in God's hands so that His will be done in either eye.

Five months have passed since I wrote the previous paragraphs. The situation of both eyes is stable and the vision of the left eye is very good.

- P.C.J. (Spain)