

SAINT JOSEMARÍA TODAY



TO SERVE THE CHURCH AS THE CHURCH WANTS TO BE SERVED

“Faithfulness to the Pope includes a clear and definite duty: that of knowing his thought, which he tells us in Encyclicals or other documents. We have to do our part to help all Catholics pay attention to the teaching of the Holy Father, and bring their everyday behavior into line with it.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *The Forge*, no. 633.

LOVING THE POPE

Selection of texts from St. Josemaría's preaching and writings on love for the Church, and some recollections from those who knew him. p. 2

POPE FRANCIS

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FAVORS

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2013



IN PERIODS BETWEEN POPES

“Thank you, my God,
for that love for the
Pope you have placed
in my heart.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *The Way*, no. 573.

“There is no other
possible attitude for a
Catholic: we have to
defend the authority
of the Pope always,
and to be ready always
to correct our own
views with docility, in
line with the teaching
authority of the
Church.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *The Forge*, no. 581.

“In those two times between Popes [1958 and 1963], besides encouraging us to offer suffrages with filial piety for the soul of the deceased Roman Pontiff, he asked us to pray insistently for his Successor. He added that we should strive to love him already, seeing in him the *dolce Cristo in terra* [the Sweet Christ on earth], our common Father, Peter. He didn't limit himself to giving us this advice once or twice during those days; he repeated it untiringly and helped us transform our work into prayer, offering it for the future Pope that God wanted to place at the head of the Church.

“I recall his emotion and faith when we told him about the *fumata Bianca*, the white smoke [indicating a new Pope had been chosen]. From that moment on he began to pray devoutly the *oremus pro Beatissimo Papa nostro*¹, let us pray for our Blessed Pope, without knowing as yet who he was. He loved him already with his whole heart and prayed that the new Pontiff would carry out his Pontificate in a holy and effective manner.

“He confided to us that, as a son, he wanted to share already in the burden that our Lord had placed upon the person elected. He wanted to help him with all his strength, and therefore he began to pray in a constant way for him. More than once, during those lengthy periods of anticipation, he exclaimed: I already love him with my whole soul, whoever he might be.”

Javier Echevarría, *Memoria del Beato Josemaría Escrivá*, Rialp, Madrid 2000, p. 347.

¹ “A liturgical prayer which includes: ‘May God protect him, encourage him, make him happy on earth, and free him from his enemies.’”

PHOTO/THE PRELATE OF OPUS DEI, BISHOP JAVIER ECHEVARRÍA, THANKS BLESSED JOHN PAUL II AT THE CANONIZATION OF ST. JOSEMARÍA, ON OCTOBER 6, 2002.



DESIRE TO “ROMANIZE” ALL CATHOLICS

“I have taught you to love the adjective ‘Roman,’ which we use to designate the children of the one, true Church. I want to preach this and to ‘Romanize’ all the souls I can. . . . We have to ‘Romanize’ ourselves, I insist. Part of that effort means preparing our soul so that none of the unfortunate things we might see ever weaken our faith, so that we are never scandalized when we hear this sort of news. It will also help you grow in your love for the holy Church, the Spouse of Jesus Christ.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, as quoted in Andrés Vázquez de Prada, *El Fundador del Opus Dei*, Vol. 3, Rialp, Madrid, 2003, pp. 140-141.

PRAYING FOR THE POPE AND HIS INTENTIONS

“For me, in the hierarchy of love, the Pope comes right after the Most Holy Trinity and our Mother the Virgin. I cannot forget that it was his Holiness Pius XII who approved *Opus Dei* at a time when some people considered our spirituality a *heresy*. Nor can I forget that the first words of kindness and affection I received in Rome in 1946 came from the then Monsignor Montini. The affable and paternal charm of John XXIII, every time I had occasion to visit him, remains engraved in my memory. Once I told him ‘In our Work all men, Catholics or not, have always been lovingly received. It is not from your Holiness that I learned ecumenism.’ And Pope John laughed with obvious emotion. What more can I tell you? The Roman Pontiffs, all of them, have always had understanding and affection for *Opus Dei*.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *Conversations with Saint Josemaría Escrivá*, no. 46.

PHOTOS/PAUL VI SAYS GOOD-BYE TO ST. JOSEMARÍA AFTER A LENGTHY VISIT TO ELIS CENTER IN ROME IN 1965. THIS INITIATIVE OFFERS HUMAN AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO YOUNG WORKERS.

AUDIENCE WITH BLESSED JOHN XXIII GRANTED TO ST. JOSEMARÍA AND MSGR. ALVARO DEL PORTILLO



THE FIRST TRIP TO ROME

“May the daily consideration of the heavy burden which weighs upon the Pope and the bishops move you to venerate and love them with real affection, and to help them with your prayers.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *The Forge*,
no. 136.

“At nightfall on June 23, [1946] we arrived in Rome. At the first glimpse of St. Peter’s from the Via Aurelia, the Father, deeply moved, said the Creed. We had rented some rooms on the top floor of a building at 9 Piazza della Citta Leonina; there was a balcony from which St. Peter’s Basilica and the pontifical palace could be seen. When he went out on this balcony and saw the rooms occupied by the Vicar of Christ, the Father said he wanted to remain there awhile; and so he did, staying recollected in prayer while the others, exhausted, went straight to bed. Out of love for the Pope, made all the more palpable by this proximity to the papal apartment, and without a thought for his fatigue, for his diabetes and the intense thirst which this must have been causing him, or for the toll taken on him by the hardships of his long sea voyage, the Father spent the whole night in prayer, on that balcony.

“This episode gives us some idea of the intensity of the founder’s love for the Church and the Pope.”

Alvaro del Portillo, *Immersed in God*, Scepter Publishers, New York, 2000, pp. 2-3.

PHOTO/ST. JOSEMARÍA WOULD RECITE THE CREED WHENEVER HE WENT TO ST. PETER’S BASILICA. THIS IS A CUSTOM THAT HE FOSTERED IN HIS SONS AND DAUGHTERS. THE PHOTO IS FROM HIS EARLY YEARS IN ROME.



A LOVE FOR THE ROMAN PONTIFF THAT WAS SHOWN EXTERNALLY

“I should point out that Msgr. Escrivá never became nervous. However, whenever he was near the Roman Pontiff, he felt deeply moved, an emotion which he never wanted to lose nor to hide. Similarly, he was delighted when I, as his secretary, would have the chance to greet the Successor of St. Peter. He always told me the same thing: **Get down on your knees and use those opportunities to show your affection and veneration for the Vicar of Christ, and to increase your prayer and your union with the Pope.** I saw the same deep emotional reaction in him in 1965, during the inauguration ceremony for the ELIS Center in Rome. During his address to Paul VI, his voice and his hands trembled, something completely out of keeping with his way of being, as a person who had confronted the most trying circumstances with serenity and aplomb.”

Javier Echevarría, *Memoria del Beato Josemaría Escrivá*, Rialp, Madrid, 2000, p. 346.

“I venerate with all my strength the Rome of Peter and Paul, bathed in the blood of martyrs, the center from which so many have set out to propagate throughout the world the saving word of Christ. To be Roman does not entail any manifestation of provincialism, but rather of authentic ecumenism. It presupposes the desire to enlarge the heart, to open it to all men with the redemptive zeal of Christ, who seeks all mankind and takes in all men and women, for he has loved all of them first.

“Saint Ambrose wrote a few words which comprise, as it were, a song of joy: ‘Where Peter is, there is the Church; and where the Church is, not death, but eternal life reigns’ (St. Ambrose, *In XII Ps Enarratio* 40, 30). For where Peter and the Church are, there Christ is; and he is salvation, the only way.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *In Love with the Church*, no. 11.

PHOTOS/THE VENERABLE BISHOP ALVARO DEL PORTILLO GREETS BLESSED JOHN PAUL II AFTER THE BEATIFICATION OF ST. JOSEMARÍA ON MAY 17, 1992.



AUTHENTIC POWER IS SERVICE

“Offer your prayer,
your atonement, and
your action for this
end: *ut sint unum!*—
that all of us
Christians may share
one will, one heart,
one spirit. So that
*omnes cum Petro ad
Iesum per Mariam*—
that we may all go to
Jesus, closely united
to the Pope, through
Mary.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *The Forge*,
no. 647.

“Joseph is a ‘protector’ because he is able to hear God’s voice and be guided by his will; and for this reason he is all the more sensitive to the persons entrusted to his safekeeping. He can look at things realistically, he is in touch with his surroundings, he can make truly wise decisions. In him, dear friends, we learn how to respond to God’s call, readily and willingly, but we also see the core of the Christian vocation, which is Christ! Let us protect Christ in our lives, so that we can protect others, so that we can protect creation!

“Caring, protecting, demands goodness, it calls for a certain tenderness. In the Gospels, Saint Joseph appears as a strong and courageous man, a working man, yet in his heart we see great tenderness, which is not the virtue of the weak but rather a sign of strength of spirit and a capacity for concern, for compassion, for genuine openness to others, for love. We must not be afraid of goodness, of tenderness!

“Let us never forget that authentic power is service, and that the Pope too, when exercising power, must enter ever more fully into that service which has its radiant culmination on the Cross. He must be inspired by the lowly, concrete and faithful service which marked Saint Joseph and, like him, he must open his arms to protect all of God’s people and embrace with tender affection the whole of humanity, especially the poorest, the weakest.”

Pope Francis, Homily on March 19, 2013, for the inauguration of his Pontificate.



STRENGTHENING THE CHURCH'S CREDIBILITY

“The proclamation made by Peter and the Apostles does not merely consist of words: fidelity to Christ affects their whole lives, which are changed, given a new direction, and it is through their lives that they bear witness to the faith and to the proclamation of Christ. In today’s Gospel, Jesus asks Peter three times to feed his flock, to feed it with his love, and he prophesies to him: ‘When you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go’ (Jn 21:18). These words are addressed first and foremost to those of us who are pastors: we cannot feed God’s flock unless we let ourselves be carried by God’s will even where we would rather not go, unless we are prepared to bear witness to Christ with the gift of ourselves, unreservedly, not in a calculating way, sometimes even at the cost of our lives . . . We should all ask ourselves: How do I bear witness to Christ through my faith? Do I have the courage of Peter and the other Apostles, to think, to choose and to live as a Christian, obedient to God? ...Let us all remember this: one cannot proclaim the Gospel of Jesus without the tangible witness of one’s life. Those who listen to us and observe us must be able to see in our actions what they hear from our lips, and so give glory to God! . . . Inconsistency on the part of pastors and the faithful between what they say and what they do, between word and manner of life, is undermining the Church’s credibility.”

Pope Francis, Homily, April 14, 2013, in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

“Welcome the Pope’s words with a religious, humble, internal and effective acceptance. And pass them on.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *The Forge*, no. 133.

“Every day you must grow in loyalty towards the Church, the Pope and the Holy See ... with a love that should be always more theological.”

St. Josemaría Escrivá, *Furrow*, no. 353.

FAVORS

A WALLET THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY

I am a flight attendant. I became a Catholic through reading the writings of St. Josemaría. I was on a trip to São Paulo, Brazil, four days ago and I lost my wallet. I was so depressed and discouraged, it had my driver's license, a picture of my son, my credit cards... Last night before I went to sleep I prayed to St. Josemaría: Please dear Father, would you help me recover my wallet and I will spread your devotion wherever I go.

This morning I was awakened by a phone call from Brazil from the hotel. The van driver found my wallet and it is safe and sound in the safe and the next crew will bring it back to me. This is truly a miracle considering where I was... It is unheard of to recoup things like these in our travels.

Thank you St. Josemaría.

W.T.L. (U.S.A., e-mail)



LOST AND FOUND

I would like to give witness, while also resolving to write down each time it happens, to the great number of favors St. Josemaría has granted me to help find things I have lost.

Whenever I can't find something, which happens to me quite often, I go to his intercession,

THE IMPOSSIBLE HAPPENED

My Grandma who is 92 passed out and we had to take her to the hospital...as she was unconscious...The doctors said there was no hope.

I prayed to St. Josemaría Escrivá...and kept my hand on her head...and the impossible happened, she regained consciousness and now is safely back home.

Thank you, dear St. Josemaría for the miracle...I am very, very grateful!

D.P. (U.S.A., e-mail)

and with only a few exceptions I have found everything quickly.

I could make a long list, from big things such as money, my wallet, important documents, keys, etc., to other small items that seem to get lost almost every day. I go to the Father and sooner or later everything turns up.

M. F. C. (Barcelona, Spain)

A STRIKING CHANGE

In January I went with some friends to see a painting exposition, and afterwards we decided to eat the sandwiches we had brought with us in a park. We sat down on a bench; nearby was a young man who seemed to have drunk most of the jug of wine he was holding. I felt sorry for him and decided to give him a prayer card to St. Josemaría. But first I offered him something to eat, which he was happy to accept. Afterwards I gave him the prayer card. He told me that he recognized it because



his mother had the same prayer card in their home back in the Netherlands. In the following days I continued praying for that person, whom I called “the Dutch fellow.”

A week later I went with the same friends to pray in the chapel of St. Josemaría in the Almudena Cathedral and I saw him there, completely sober, also praying. This has helped me to have more faith in prayer, on seeing the fruit of the prayers of this man’s mother united to mine.

I. S. (Madrid, Spain)

THE CAR REAPPEARS

During the Easter Vigil ceremonies in 2012, our SUV was stolen. We live about 30 miles from Madrid and spent part of the night at the police station giving an account of what had happened. A month later our insurance company called and said they were ready to settle with us, but we decided that we preferred to wait

One morning about three months later, my aunt who is a Supernumerary called to ask if we had found the car, since she had just finished a novena

to St. Josemaría for this intention. I was impressed that she had decided to pray the novena again after such a long time, and even more so when two hours later we received a call from the police to tell us that the car had been found, filled with gas and without a scratch on it. I thank St. Josemaría for this new favor.

M. L. P. (Madrid, Spain)

CLOSE TO MY HOME

I had always been given assignments to teach in schools quite far from my home, in other provinces.

One day I had the good fortune that a neighbor spoke to me about St. Josemaría. I prayed with a lot of faith and the next semester I was given a teaching position in a school about 35 miles from my home. And the following year I passed the exams to become a permanent teacher and was assigned to a school right near where I live.

J. G. M. (Jaén, Spain)

A HAPPY LIBERATION

I am writing to tell you that St. Josemaría, for the third time, has obtained for me a miracle. Last Sunday, the 24th, my husband and I went to Torreón Coahuila to pick up some of our belongings, since we had recently moved. On the way to the city, we were kidnapped by a group of heavily armed men with assault rifles who forced us to get into the back of the van. We thought we were going to die. They took everything we had: cell phones, wallets,

money, wedding rings. I began to pray because they were beating my husband. For several hours I prayed and entrusted our souls to God.

When I had finished praying to St. Josemaría, the situation changed dramatically. The kidnappers said they were sparing our lives, gave us back everything and returned us to the highway. We didn't see anything because we were crouched down in back, but we heard their voices.

St. Josemaría gained for us the miracle of saving our life. I am writing this because I want the whole world to know about the miracle obtained from God in his infinite mercy. Thank you Our Lady of Guadalupe, thank you Saint Josemaría.

A. M. C. (Mexico)

THE SAINT OF WORK

I am writing to you to let you know that this beautiful Novena worked for me. I have been looking for work for six months. I had e-mailed a past supervisor to request that I use his name as a reference. I said the Novena twice. A few days after I completed the second Novena, I received an email from that past supervisor asking if I was still looking for work. I was interviewed the next week by his new company.

Due to family obligations, I was hoping for a family-friendly job. He offered me a salary position at 32 hours a week. My pay was even at a higher rate than I was expecting. I am in my second week and I enjoy every minute at work, it is challenging but nothing I can't handle. My kids and husband are adjusting surprisingly well.



I love this beautiful Novena and am going to keep saying it to help me be the best employee I can. Thank you!

E.N. (California)

MY MOTHER'S CURE

One day I received a phone call and was told to come right away if I wanted to see my mother alive. I took the first flight available and went directly to the hospital. Before I entered the room where my mother was dying, my sister informed me of the extreme seriousness of her condition. I had to wait at the door for a few minutes because the doctor was inside. I began to pray the rosary, mixing the words with my tears.

When I was able to enter I saw my mother breathing with great effort, helped by an oxygen mask. She was not conscious nor did she open her eyes. The doctor invited me to say good-bye to her because in his opinion she had only a few minutes to live. I kissed my mother on the forehead and then asked the doctor why he hadn't intubated the patient. He said that would only hasten the end. Then he left and I remained there weeping and praying. I put my hand in my jacket pocket to take out a handkerchief and there I found a small prayer card of St. Josemaría, whom I have always admired a lot and to whom I felt a special devotion.

With the confidence of one to whom all the doors here below had closed and the only remaining hope was in God, I took the prayer card and spoke as if I had St. Josemaría himself before me. I told him that I didn't consider



myself worthy to ask God for my mother's cure, but that I knew the love and trust that he had always had in God. While I prayed and wept I placed the prayer card of St. Josemaría under the pillow and said: St. Josemaría, ask our Lord that they intubate my mother!

Hardly three or four minutes had gone by before the doctor entered and said: I've changed my opinion. I just met two colleagues in the hallway and they convinced me that we should intubate your mother. At that moment I had the conviction that our Lord had heard me.

I had said to St. Josemaría: also ask him to leave my mother with us for another five or six years. The truth is that I don't know why I said five or six years.

After being intubated my mother experienced an extraordinary improvement. And eight days later she got up and left the hospital. The strange thing is that she lived afterwards for almost six years—just what I had asked of St. Josemaría.

B. G. J. (Barcelona, Spain)

FINDING WORK The Office for the Causes of Saints receives hundreds of testimonies about finding jobs after praying the **Novena for Work to St. Josemaría** (http://www.josemariaescriva.info/opus_dei/NovenaforWork.pdf).



PRAYER

Oh God, through the mediation
of Mary our Mother, you granted your priest
Saint Josemaría countless graces,
choosing him as a most faithful instrument
to found Opus Dei, a way of sanctification
in daily work and in the fulfillment
of the Christian's ordinary duties.
Grant that I too may learn to turn
all the circumstances and events of my life
into occasions of loving you
and serving the Church,
the Pope and all souls with joy and simplicity,
lighting up the pathways of this earth
with faith and love.
Deign to grant me, through the intercession
of Saint Josemaría, the favor of...
(make your request). Amen

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

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