

BULLETIN ON THE LIFE OF MSGR. ESCRIVA

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This *Bulletin* is published with the ecclesiastical approval of the Sacred
Congregation for the Causes of Saints.



**The Venerable Servant of God
JOSEMARIA ESCRIVA
Founder of Opus Dei**

BULLETIN No. 9, NEW YORK

Monsignor Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer was born in Barbastro, Spain, on January 9, 1902. He was ordained to the priesthood in Saragossa on March 28, 1925.

In Madrid, on October 2, 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 one's ordinary work and in the fulfillment of one's family, social and personal obligations. Thus it has been a leaven of fervent Christian life in every environment. On February 14, 1930, the Venerable Josemaria Escriva understood, with the grace of God, that Opus Dei had also to develop its apostolate among women. On February 14, 1943, he founded the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross, inseparably united to Opus Dei. Opus Dei received its definitive approval from the Holy See on June 16, 1950; and, on November 28, 1982, it was established as a personal Prelature. This legal framework had been desired and foreseen by the Venerable Josemaria Escriva.

Through a life of constant prayer and penance, exercising all the virtues to a heroic degree, with loving dedication and untiring concern for all souls, and with a continuous and unconditional self-surrender to the will of God, Monsignor Josemaria Escriva fostered and directed the expansion of Opus Dei throughout the world. When he rendered up his soul to God, Opus Dei had spread to the five continents, with over 60,000 members of 80 nationalities, serving the Church with the same spirit of complete union with, and deep veneration for, the Pope and the Bishops that Monsignor Escriva had always practiced and instilled in his sons and daughters.

The Holy Mass was the root and center of the interior life of the Founder. A deep sense of his divine filiation, maintained in the continuous presence of the One and Triune God, moved him to seek in all things the most complete identification with Jesus Christ, to have a tender and strong devotion to Our Lady and Saint Joseph, a continual and confident friendship with the Holy Guardian Angels, and to be a sower of peace and joy along all the paths of the earth.

On repeated occasions Monsignor Escriva had offered his life for the Church and for the Roman Pontiff. Our Lord accepted that offering, and on June 26, 1975, in a truly saintly way, Monsignor Escriva gave up his soul to God in Rome in the room where he worked.

His body lies in the crypt of the Prelatic Church of Our Lady of Peace, Viale Bruno Buozzi, 75, Rome, continually accompanied by the prayer and gratitude of his sons and daughters, and of the countless people who have come closer to God drawn by the example and teaching of the Founder of Opus Dei. The Cause of Canonization of Monsignor Escriva was presented in Rome on February 19, 1981. On April 9, 1990, the Holy Father Pope John Paul II declared the heroicity of the Christian virtues of the Venerable Servant of God.

Holy See Recognizes Miracle of the Venerable Josemaria Escriva

On July 6, 1991, at 12:40 p.m., the public reading of the decree recognizing as miraculous a cure attributed to the intercession of the Venerable Josemaria Escriva, founder of Opus Dei, took place before the Holy Father. In the presence of various Cardinals, Bishops, and officials of the Congregation of the Causes of Saints, the Pope formally approved the medical and theological conclusions reached by the Congregation concerning this impressive event. Bishop Alvaro del Portillo, Prelate of Opus Dei, was also present at the ceremony, which took place in the Apostolic Palace.

The confirmed miracle involved a 70-year-old Spanish Carmelite nun, Sister Concepcion Boullon, who was suddenly, completely, and permanently cured of tumors. Medical consultants of the Congregation of the Causes of Saints confirmed the diagnosis as "*multiple calcific lipomatosis with numerous widespread painful and debilitating deposits, the largest one, in the left shoulder being the size of an orange, in a patient in a cachectic state with a gastric ulcer and a hiatus hernia, complicated by acute hypochromic anemia.*"

Thus another important step has occurred in the Cause of the Founder of Opus Dei. Directing our most fervent prayers to God for the Canonization of the Venerable Josemaria, we thank him with all our heart for the countless favors he has granted abundantly all over the world through the intercession of his Servant.

As was already stated by the Decree on heroic virtues, the spread of private devotion to Venerable Josemaria Escriva is evidence of "a genuine expression of popular devotion." The decree on the miracle speaks of "tens of thousands of favors, both spiritual and material, including some that are patently extraordinary," attributed to the Founder of Opus Dei and which confirm "the power of his intercession before God."

More than 75,000 signed statements have been submitted from all over the world regarding favors received through his intercession. In addition, the Postulation Office has compiled 1,200 pages of documentation of 20 other cures attributed to the Founder of Opus Dei which, according to specialists, cannot be explained scientifically.

The Pontifical Decree

Pontifical decree recognizing the miracle attributed to the Venerable Servant of God Josemaria Escriva

The Venerable Josemaria Escriva was born in Barbastro, Spain, on January 9, 1902. His specific ecclesial charism consisted in the vigorous proclamation of the radical nature of the baptismal vocation as a call to holiness. By divine inspiration, he founded Opus Dei on October 2, 1928. Shortly afterwards, on February 14, 1930, with the grace of God, he understood that Opus Dei had to also develop its apostolate among women. On February 14, 1943, likewise moved by God, he founded the Priestly Society

of the Holy Cross. Thus for all faithful – for priests and lay persons, men and women – he opened a spacious way of sanctification in the midst of the world through the practice of daily work and in the loving fulfillment of ordinary duties, without changing one's state in life. At the time of his death in Rome on June 26, 1975, he had a vast reputation for holiness, and Opus Dei, under his zealous guidance, had spread to the five continents.

Throughout the world, his message, incarnated in a solid pastoral institution, produced extraordinary fruit. God enabled him to contemplate how the search for total union with

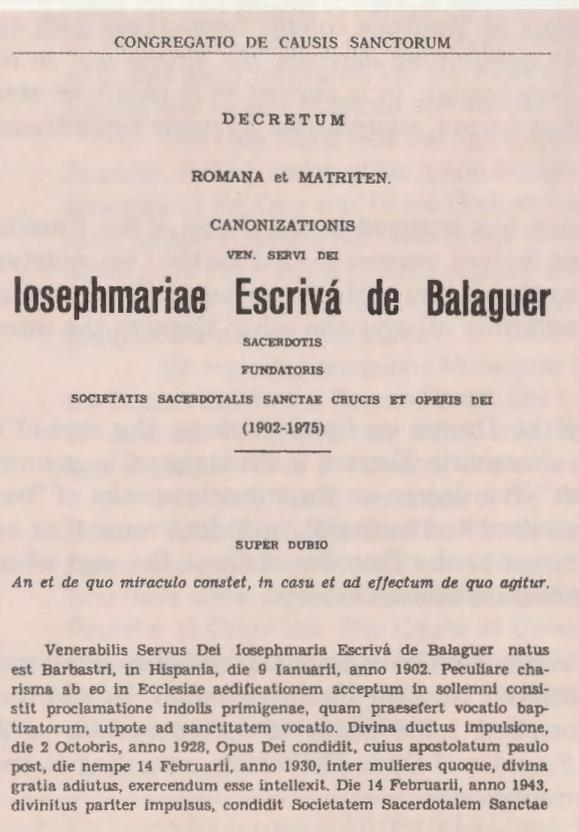
Christ in ordinary activities releases marvelously saving energies for Christianizing the world from within.

When he died, numberless testimonies, from far and wide, gave witness to the proven heroism he displayed throughout the entire course of his life. Upon completion of all the juridical requirements, on April 9, 1990, the Holy Father John Paul II deigned to issue the decree on the Servant of God's heroic exercise of virtues.

Tens of thousands of favors, both spiritual and material, including some that are patently extraordinary, soon confirmed the depth of his reputation for sanctity and the power of his intercession before God. Outstanding among the prodigious cures attributed to him is one of a 70-year-old Carmelite Sister of Charity, Concepcion Boullon Rubio. One night in June 1976, the sister, who had been at the point of death, was cured in a sudden, complete, and lasting way, after the Servant of God had been invoked, of a sickness that has been diagnosed by the Medical Council of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints in the following terms: "a multiple calcific lipomatosis tumor in a subject of the white race with multiple locations caus-



The Holy Father Pope John Paul II, Cardinal Eduardo Martinez Somalo and the Prelate of Opus Dei, Msgr. Alvaro del Portillo, on July 6, 1991, just after the reading of the Decree.





Pope John Paul II with several members of the Curia on July 6, 1991, after the reading of the Decree of the miracle attributed to the intercession of the Venerable Josemaria Escriva.

ing pain and invalidation, attaining a maximum mass the size of an orange in the area of the left shoulder." Along with the illness, there was a concomitant pathological condition diagnosed by the Medical Council as follows: "Cachectic state in a patient with gastric ulcer and hiatus hernia, complicated by acute hypochromic anemia." The second illness also improved unforeseeably and inexplicably at the moment when the swelling disappeared to the point of a definitive cure. The same Council has ascertained that the prognosis was seriously inauspicious *quoad vitam and quoad valetudinem* (with respect to life and to health).

A process on this extraordinary cure was held in the offices of the Archbishop of Madrid from January 21 to April 3, 1982. This process received the decree of validity from the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints on November 20, 1984.

Following the prescriptions of law, the case was submitted first to the examination of the aforementioned Medical Council. The Council, in its session on June 30, 1990, concluded unanimously that the cure of Sister Concepcion Boullon Rubio is not explicable on the basis of natural powers.

Thence the cure was sifted in theological examination first by the Particular Congress of Theological Consultants, which met on July 14, 1990

under the direction of Msgr. Antonio Petti, the Promoter-General of the Faith. Then it was examined on June 18, 1991, in an Ordinary Congregation of Cardinals and Bishops, held in the Apostolic Palace, with Cardinal Edouard Gagnon acting as Presenter. Both organisms unanimously gave a positive judgment on the existence of the miracle and its attribution to the Venerable Josemaria Escriva.

Having received from the undersigned Cardinal Prefect an accurate and faithful account of all that is related above, and having accepted and ratified the vote of the Congregation, the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II ordered that the Decree on the aforesaid extraordinary cure be drawn up.

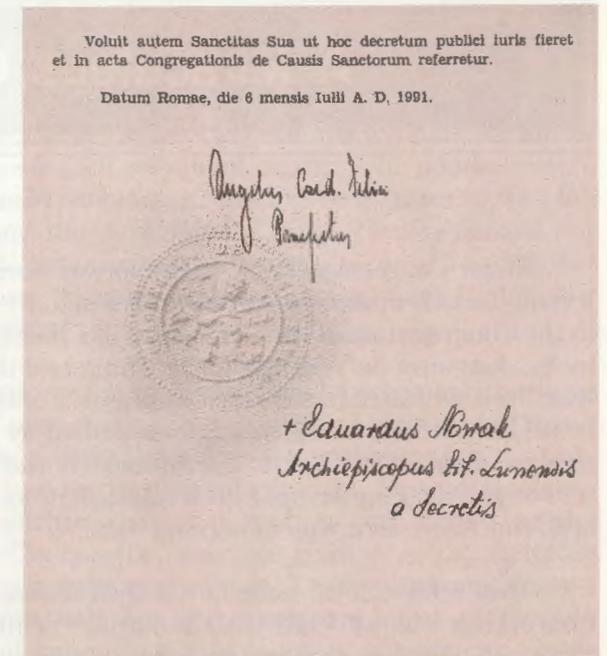
That order having now been carried out, and the Cardinal Prefect, the Presenter of the Cause, the undersigned Secretary and others according to custom having been convoked today, the Holy Father has declared in their presence: Proofs exist of the miracle performed by God, through the intercession of his Venerable Servant Josemaria Escriva, Priest, Founder of the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei: that is, of the instantaneous, complete and lasting cure of Sister Concepcion Boullon Rubio, Carmelite Sister of Charity, of a multiple calcific lipomatosis tumor in a subject of the white race with multiple locations causing pain and invalidation, attaining a maximum mass the size of an orange in the area of the left shoulder; and of a cachectic state in a patient with gastric ulcer and hiatus hernia, complicated by acute hypochromic anemia.

The Holy Father has ordered that this decree be made public and be recorded in the Acts of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.

Given at Rome, on July 6 of the year 1991, A.D.

Angelus Card. Felici, Prefect

+Eduardus Nowak, Titular Archbishop of Luni



A Miraculous Cure

Sister Concepcion Boullon Rubio was born in Burbaguena, in the Province of Teruel, Spain, on January 23, 1906. In 1929 she made her profession in the Congregation of the Carmelites of Charity, founded in the 19th century by St. Joaquina de Vedruna for teaching and charitable works. The religious who lived with her in the convent of San Lorenzo del Escorial, near Madrid, recall her virtues, being themselves edified by them. Sister Pilar Prieto particularly recalls "her spirit of acceptance of the will of God, especially in matters of physical suffering. She treated pain as a manifestation of God's will and, therefore, as a way of serving him."

This reference to pain is not gratuitous, since for many years Sister Concepcion was afflicted with a number of illnesses so that finally, in the spring of 1976, she was on the verge of dying.

The first occasion for alarm was in 1972 when certain acute and persistent gastric symptoms had appeared. Afterward, near the end of 1974, some very painful tumorous growths appeared on the right shoulder, the left foot, and the right thumb. Shortly afterward, these tumors grew to a considerable size, the one on the shoulder, for example, reached the size of an orange. The immobility, sleeplessness, and very intense pain brought the sick woman to a state of complete prostration. In their statements, the other nuns make special reference to frequent hemorrhages and weight-loss of their fellow-sister, who went from 180 pounds to 92. "Sister Concepcion looked like a corpse," they state.

Together with the growth of the tumors, the gastric disease accelerated. It was at that time that a hiatal hernia and a gastric ulcer which caused large hemorrhages were detected. The two sets of symptoms were independent of one another, but the complication which the presence of both caused in her



Sister Concepcion Boullon Rubio after the miraculous cure.

general state made any kind of stomach surgery extremely dangerous. Dr. Munoz stated: "There was no possible way of carrying out this type of treatment due to the general state of her health."

About the middle of 1976, Sister Concepcion seemed to be in the terminal stages. The doctors prognosticated imminent death: "The general condition of the patient was gradually worsening, the digestive process was following an alarming course, and the development of the tumors caused her enormous pain." The Superior, Sister Leandra Herranz, recalls the verdict of one of the community's doctors: "He told us not to bother her, that Sister would be with us but a short time."

The histological examination of a specimen for biopsy, using the most advanced techniques, made a precise diagnosis possible: Lipomatosis. It is a rare disease of unknown cause. Clinical experience has shown that the only useful therapy against such tumors is surgical removal. Specialists agree that the diagnosis of death within a short period, as formulated by the doctors who cared for Sister Concepcion, was the right one. Dr. Ortiz de Landazuri, a prestigious Spanish internist, wrote: "These tumorous masses not only were harmful for the patient, but had a negative effect on her general condition. It was a set of symptoms that followed a very dangerous course for the life of the patient."

In expectation of death, now thought to be imminent, she was given no treatment, except some analgesic "in moderate doses" and with a "very poor" response, according to the attending physician, Dr. Jose Wanguemert.

Sister Concepcion never prayed for her own cure. This detail rules out a possible unconscious psychological influence in the cure. One of the physicians later stated: "Sister Concepcion's abandonment in God is such that she did not consciously wish to improve. She sincerely believed that God our Lord asked that painful condition of her and she accepted it with the greatest conformity."

It was Sister Concepcion's sisters who prayed for her, through the intercession of the Servant of God Josemaria Escriva. They turned to the Servant of God in the closing months of 1975, and this recourse to his intercession grew more insistent as the condition of Sister Concepcion grew worse. Her sister Felisa explains, "On another occasion we were coming back from a trip, my sisters Josefina and Carmen, and myself. And I recall that we said the Rosary for our sister who is a religious. Our intention was made through the Servant of God. I remember that day a cousin had given me a book and some prayer cards of the Servant of God. This would have been about the middle of June 1976. From that time on, as often as we said the family Rosary, we used to make the intention that of my sister, through the intercession of the Servant of God."

Another sister, Josefina, says that every morning she prayed for Sister Concepcion in front of a prayer card of the Founder of Opus Dei while she cleaned house.



Monsignor Escriva in a get-together at Brafa, Barcelona (Spain), on November 25, 1972.

In spite of the alarming news coming from the convent near the middle of June 1976, the sisters of the religious did not grow discouraged, but rather intensified their petitions. And, in very close dependency upon their prayers, there came the unforeseen cure.

During an especially difficult night, the religious felt some pain that was so acute that she believed that her last hour had come. The doctor states, "She was resigned to it and had interior peace. She saw that she could die and she offered her life to God." About five o'clock in the morning she finally went off to sleep. She rested for about two hours, and, at seven, feeling better, decided to take a shower. It was then that she realized that the tumor on her shoulder had disappeared. Even though no wound was visible, Sister Concepcion thought that the tumor could have burst the skin and went to see whether the sheets were stained. She saw no stain. She decided to dress, and in the moment that she was putting on her slippers, saw that the tumor on the left foot had also disappeared, leaving no trace.

The recollections of the superior, Sister Leandra Herranz, help to fix the date on which the amazing disappearance of the tumors took place at about the middle of June 1976: "I can still recall a fact that allows me to be more precise about the date of the cure: June 21, 1976, by an injury that Sister Pilar Prieto had received. She had to go to the doctor and be X-rayed. I told Sister Concepcion to go with her. That means she was already cured by that date."

The cure was absolutely sudden, to the point that immediately after the disappearance of the tumors, Sister Concepcion not only was in condition to

rise from her bed, but she attended Mass together with the other sisters. A few days later she even went out, to accompany another sister on a visit to the radiologist. In short, she went in a very short time from death's door to a practically normal life. The other religious recall that already on the very morning on which the tumors disappeared, she said she felt very well.

The radiologist, Dr. Fermin Munoz, was very surprised when he recognized her: "If I were still a student I would put this case under study, because it is one for the museum," he exclaimed. A few days later the attending physician, equally stupefied, checked the cure and prescribed an X-ray examination. "In these pictures the complete disappearance of the tumorous mass attracts attention." Later series of X-rays confirmed that the cure was total, as Dr. Wanguemert himself testifies: "In X-rays taken later, of the hands, feet, and shoulders, there is no tumor visible, nor does any X-ray image offer any indication even of the tumorous growths suffered in the year 1975."

Together with the cure of the tumors, a progressive disappearance of the gastric problems she had suffered since 1972 was observed. The hemorrhages suddenly stopped, the anemic process began to return to normal, and the X-rays showed no signs of the gastric ulcer. Prof. Ortiz de Landazuri has stated: "From that night in the month of June 1976, the progress of the patient also continued in a surprising form. After the disappearance of the tumors, the digestive problems were receding and the general condition of the patient improved." The radiologist testifies explicitly to the disappearance of the ulcer: "The last X-ray examination which I made of Sister Concepcion was to explore her stomach on October 22, 1977. There was no trace of gastric ulcer."

The founder of Opus Dei in a gathering at Brafa, Barcelona (Spain), on November 22, 1972.





Monsignor Escriva (center) in an informal meeting with youths in Rome, March 26, 1970.

The medical experts who visited her in 1982 during the canonical process testified that the cure had been complete and that in all that time the illness had not reappeared: "The subjective condition of Sister Concepcion is excellent. Sister Concepcion Boullon Rubio is found to be absolutely cured."

Mrs. Maria del Pilar Lopez Boullon, her niece, could observe personally the rapid improvement of Sister Concepcion: "I remember that at Christmas of 1976 she was in my home and even ate spiced sausage, and it agreed with her. During that same Christmas season, I had a baby and Sister Concepcion offered to take on the housework, along with the work of taking care of my other four children. And she helped my mother with everything, being well enough to do so."

For the doctors there is no doubt that, from the scientific standpoint, the cure is inexplicable, as Dr. Munoz testifies: "All the physicians familiar with the case are amazed, finding no scientific explanation which would explain her cure." Dr. Jose Wanguemert states the same thing: "Such a sudden disappearance of the tumors described, with no therapy, is not medically explicable."

During the process of investigation of the miracle, the tribunal entrusted to two specialists the task of verifying that the cure had been complete. These men declared: "There is no scientific interpretation nor is there any case in available medical literature of a clinical evolution of this type."

The experts of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints had no doubt either: "Lipomatosis is a disease which cannot be cured without surgical intervention."

Besides this, the physicians not only recognized that the cure of Lipomatosis falls completely outside the possibilities of science, but also that

the simultaneous normalization of the gastric problems is not a natural occurrence: "In one night in June 1976 the firmly hardened, calcified tumors diagnosed as Lipomatosis suddenly disappeared. From that moment on, there was a spectacular change from her grave condition to clinical health, with no pharmaceutical or any other cause, living, from that time, a normal life. Both the sudden disappearance of the tumors as well as the rapid general improvement are not scientifically explainable."

This conclusion is also shared by the specialists of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints: "There is no possibility of attributing the cure of either of the two pathologies to therapeutic treatment, either medical or surgical. For this reason, due to the rapidity of the cure and the permanence of its effects, no natural logical explanation can be given. According to our scientific knowledge, the cure must be considered unexplainable."

From the very first moment, Sister Concepcion and the religious of her convent were certain that a miracle had been worked in her and that it was owed to the intercession of Msgr. Escriva. In the community they remember how Sister Concepcion liked to recall that, forty years previous, a nephew of hers had asked her to pray for Opus Dei, and from that day she had done so regularly. For this reason she considered the favor that she had received "also like an answer for all that she had prayed for Opus Dei in the last forty years of her life." Sister Pilar Prieto and Sister Leandra Herranz have declared: "Sister Concha never had any doubts in that regard: for her, this was something that was God's. From the extraordinary cure of her disease, which we all attribute to the intercession of the Servant of God, Msgr. Escriva, she thought that if God had prolonged her life, through the intercession of the Servant of God, it was so that she could sanctify herself more fully."



Sr. Concepcion Boullon Rubio died on November 22, 1988, at the age of 82 of a nephrosclerosis and chronic uremia. More than twelve years had passed since the marvelous cure of the disease which had brought her to death's door. The physicians reject the idea that her death is in any way related with the affliction from which she was miraculously cured.

Monsignor Escriva with a "campesina", June 1970 (Mexico).

Favors Obtained

THESIS ACCEPTED

I was scheduled to defend my Ph.D. dissertation early in May. One of the members the committee of six appointed to conduct the examination had written an unfavorable report on the thesis in its written form, and the University informed me that, no matter how well I might defend the thesis in the oral examination it was quite unusual that an examiner whose written report recommended that a thesis not be accepted should vote in favor of the thesis on the basis of the oral examination. Moreover, if one other member of the committee agreed with him, I would not pass.

At the suggestion of my wife, she and I recited the prayer to Msgr. Escriva each night after the rosary for nine days before the defense. We prayed with particular intensity because my continued employment depended very much upon my earning the Ph. D. without delay. Our prayers were answered. The defense went well, and, remarkably, my thesis was accepted unanimously, the opposed member having been won over on the basis of the oral examination.

T. J. M. , Woodhaven (New York)

CLOSE TO HOME

I recently received information about Opus Dei through a friend of mine. I prayed to Msgr. Escriva for my son-in-law to have employment close to home. He traveled 250 miles one way and had to stay away from his family while he worked and come home on weekends.

They told him he would never have work around here near home. But through my prayers to Msgr. Escriva, he is starting to work tomorrow less than 20 miles from home. I am so grateful for the answer to my prayer I will continue praying every day.

F. D. (Pennsylvania)

GIFT OF FAITH

I have a friend who distributes many Bulletins about Opus Dei among his relatives and friends. One of his cousins received the Bulletin No. 7, read it and left it at home. Some days later a fellow student, a Protestant, went to visit him. She saw the Bulletin, in which there was a large photograph of Monsignor Escriva, and took it home with her. She read it at home and went back to ask the cousin what steps she had to take to become a Catholic. He told her that it was necessary to attend a course about the Catechism and the Catholic religion, after which, if she had faith and it was her wish, she could ask to be received into the Church. She did so.

T. N'D. H., Yamousokro (Ivory Coast)

A BATTLE WON

About a year ago I picked up the Bulletin of Msgr. Escriva from the back of our church. I read it and was really impressed by all the testimonies of his help. I didn't actually invoke his aid myself, however, until about three months later.

The account that I will relate sounds almost ridiculous but the speed in which my prayer was answered and the strength and determination that I experienced, and continue to experience, leaves me convinced of his intervention. I am the mother of two pre-schoolers. My son, 5 years old, is quite thin and has trouble maintaining weight. As an aid to his weight gain I began making him a milk shake every night. When I started the milk shake routine for my son I found that I couldn't stay away from the ice cream myself. My affinity for ice cream has been lifelong and quite strong. Until then, I always kept ice cream out of the house because I knew what it did to me.

Now it was here all the time and I was eating about a pint per day. I really couldn't help myself. Then I remembered Msgr. Escriva. I found the Bulletin and before going to bed one night, introduced myself to him and, after apologizing for the nature of my problem, told him all about this weakness of mine. I told him that I knew that with all the people in the world who are starving that I've got to get this under control. When I awoke the next day I went out to get the morning newspaper. There, on the front page, was a picture of a starving mother holding a dying infant in her arms. I knew at that moment that I would never touch ice cream again. I was so ashamed. But so happy because I knew right away that my prayer had been answered. I don't have any trouble with ice cream at all, not even as I continue to dish it out night after night.

T. M. L. (U.S.A.)

HER BEST FRIEND

Many non-Catholics or Protestants have come to the faith through the private devotion to the Venerable Servant of God Monsignor Escriva. A year ago, a friend of mine told me that one of her neighbors, an Anglican, was finding great difficulties in selling her house. She had been trying to sell it for more than six months, because she had to move to another state of Australia for family reasons. I recommended her to ask this favor from the Servant, and I gave her a prayer card. She looked at it with suspicion, since she was an Anglican, but she said she liked the look of the Servant of God. When I heard this, I gave her a Bulletin which had on the front cover a similar photograph of that on the prayer card. I heard that in a few weeks she managed to sell the house and had moved to Adelaide.

When my friend saw that her neighbor attributed this favor to the intercession of the Servant of God, she gave her as a present for the journey a copy of *The Way*. She called a number of times from Adelaide asking for more literature about the Work, and a short time ago she phoned telling us that she was being prepared to be received into the Catholic Church. She told us that throughout the year she had allowed Josemaria, her best friend, to tell her what to do. She had prayed daily the prayer card for private devotion and he helped her in everything that she asked for. She attributed having found a house in front of a Catholic Church to his intercession. She has insisted that if Opus Dei goes to that town, she will help us in whatever way she can. She hopes to be received in the Catholic Church in a few months time.

I gave the prayer card to another friend, who, because of a lack of formation and a rationalistic attitude to life, calls herself an agnostic. I did not know how she would react, since she said she only believed in a Supreme Being. She prayed the prayer card and she was astonished to see that all her prayers were heard. She now goes to Mass every Sunday, and wants to regularize her marriage.

M. F., Killara (Australia)

A SMALL JOB FOR MONSIGNOR ESCRIVA

I went to visit my daughter-in-law the day after she had given birth to a little girl. There I found some other people I did not know, and I assumed they were her friends. My son served tea and biscuits and a very nice conversation developed. Suddenly, a woman, who we later found out was not a Catholic, asked when the Baptism of the girl would be. I had not dared to ask that question, since they do not practice. My daughter-in-law said that to believe in original sin was stupid. We did not speak more about that matter. I felt a tremendous sorrow in my heart.

At home that night, I prayed the prayer for the private devotion to Monsignor Escriva. Next time I attended a morning of recollection, I told N. my worries. She told me this was "a job" for Monsignor Escriva, and that he would look after this matter. I thought that her way of expressing this was a bit rough, but nevertheless I put Monsignor Escriva to work.

Some weeks later, my son phoned me asking me to attend the Baptism of the little girl in a church. I am extremely thankful to God, because Monsignor Escriva has listened to my prayers.

E. G. V., Amsterdam (Holland)

RECOVERED FROM A COMA

On the third of March 1989, my son Pietro, a dynamic youngster, had a very serious accident. A "road pirate" ran him over and escaped, leaving him unconscious on the road. A car stopped, and they took him to the Hospital of Desio. There the doctors said that it was so serious they could not operate on him to try and save him. They transferred him to the re-animation center in Legnano, where he was diagnosed to be in a state of coma, caused by cranial trauma and several fractures. He was placed in intensive care but he did not show any signs of life. They were maintaining his life artificially and they expected him to die any moment.

When we had lost all hope, my sister invited me to pray intensely to Monsignor Escriva, and she placed a prayer card of the founder of Opus Dei under my son's pillow, so that he would intercede for the healing of my son.

My son spent five months in that situation when suddenly he woke up. The medical team was extremely surprised. Slowly my son began to recover and managed to breathe by himself. Now, after long treatment, he has started to walk slowly, and has begun to speak. The doctors are amazed by the speed of the recovery of his psychophysical capabilities. My whole family continues to pray, and is very thankful for the favor given to my son who was dead, and has come back to life.

D. M. P., Bari (Italy)

TWO SMALL FAVORS

I have received two favors through the intercession of Monsignor Escriva. First of all, my eldest son was separated from his wife because of drinking problems. They are now together again and his drinking is under control.

I have suffered arthritis for many years, but now I feel much better, and I hope to continue improving through the intercession of Monsignor Escriva.

I enclose a postal order for \$20. I hope this will help in some way. Please send me some prayer cards. I give many thanks to God.

R. M. J., Cidra (Puerto Rico)

HIGH RISK

I lost my first son in 1986, a week before his birth was due. Because of this, I thought I had lost my faith and my hope. Some days later, a friend and neighbor gave us a prayer card of Monsignor Escriva, a prayer card which we kept. Two years later, a new ray of hope shined in our lives, when the doctor confirmed that I had conceived a new child. He told us then that it was a high-risk pregnancy. I went to my mother's house confused and very worried. There, my sister, who has devotion to Monsignor Escriva told me: "Do you remember the founder of Opus Dei? Ask him with lots of faith." From then on, I clung to him like a child to a father.

There was a complication in the 32nd week of pregnancy. The child began to lose signs of life and the doctors decided to carry out a caesarean right away. They had very little hope of success. I had with me the prayer card of Monsignor Escriva, and I told him: "You who are so close to God, grant me the favor of having this child." After the child was born, they put the boy in an incubator. It had a one per cent chance of survival. Nine hours later, the *miracle* had become a reality. The doctors told me that his survival had been a miracle. They also asked me what saint had granted me this favor. My son is now 21 months and in very good health.

L. R., Valencia (Venezuela)

TWO PREGNANCIES TURN OUT WELL

We lost our two sons at the same time. They were five and three. They died victims of inexplicable and intractable encephalitis. A few months later, our hopes were shattered by a miscarriage. Soon our confidence returned with a new pregnancy. This pregnancy however was threatened by a number of causes: a danger of miscarriage in the sixth month, higher than usual levels of glucemia — detected for the first time in the mother — and risk of premature birth four weeks before it was due. The child was born without problems, in spite of the umbilical cord having a knot.

After the delivery, we learned that a friend of ours, a doctor, had often gone to the intercession of the Servant of God Josemaria Escriva, asking that everything would work out all right. We had not heard either of Opus Dei, or about that holy priest before.

A few weeks ago, another pregnancy came to a happy ending. This time, we ourselves had gone to the intercession of the Servant of God right from the start. We are convinced, together with our friend the doctor, that both pregnancies came to a good end thanks to the intercession of Josemaria Escriva. We are very thankful to God and extremely happy!

J. W., Weintzen (Austria)

AN UNHEARD OF EVENT

I have worked in an important industry in the private sector for the last twenty years. This industry is considered to hold a high degree of austerity and discipline — if someone is dismissed, it is a permanent and inviolable practice that the decision not be reconsidered.

On one occasion, three of my subordinates were sacked. This made a strong impression on me, since they were three very efficient and honest workers.

Faced with that decision, which I knew to be irrevocable, I went to the intercession of Monsignor Escriva, asking him for his help. I asked for their case to be reconsidered. I spent the rest of the day seeking his intercession before Our Lord, if he considered it just to do so.

It was a long and anxious day. I went to my boss' office at the end of my working day, so as to inquire about the decision taken. I was very worried but confident in my prayers to Monsignor Escriva. I was told that it was an unheard of event, because they had reconsidered the decision and revoked it. I spent the rest of the day saying many times the prayer card, giving thanks to the founder of Opus Dei for his brilliant intervention.

J. F., Santiago (Chile)

A CONVERSION

A friend of mine and her two daughters had been going to the intercession of the Venerable Josemaria Escriva asking for the conversion of her husband with great faith and devotion. He had been born in Scotland, and had never received any religious formation or Baptism. Nevertheless, he had always made things easy for his wife to enable their two daughters to grow up in the Catholic faith. He has also generously helped in the setting up of some oratories and other apostolic initiatives.

They went on vacation to Miami last August. She phoned me from there to tell me that they had found a malignant tumor in his stomach and the doctors had given him six months to live. I tried to help her be serene, and also encouraged her to go more intensely to the intercession of Monsignor Escriva, asking for the conversion and cure of her husband. I also told her to speak with him about the possibility of receiving Baptism.

The doctor in Miami told him that his case was too serious to be able to give him any sort of treatment. They returned to Caracas where his condition continued to worsen. On the 10th of October he was hospitalized with a hemorrhage. My friend asked me to send for a priest, since her husband had decided to be baptized.

I managed to get hold of a priest after a great many difficulties; traffic, rain and closed churches. My friend's husband wanted to be left alone with his wife and the priest. Afterward they told us that he had received Baptism and the Anointing of the Sick. He was completely conscious. We were also surprised when we were told he knew the Our Father and that he had said, with immense peace, that he was in God's hands.

I believe his conversion has been obtained through the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God Josemaria Escriva. His family and I keep praying so that if it is for God's glory, he may be cured.

A. M. (Venezuela)

The originals of these letters with the writers' names and addresses are kept in the files of the Postulation of the Cause in Rome.

Published Works of Msgr. Josemaria Escriva

The Way. "Monsignor Escriva has written something more than a masterpiece; he has written straight from the heart, and straight to the heart go the short paragraphs that make up *The Way*. In it appears the warm brotherly understanding of the author, the paternal concern with which he sees, understands and corrects, persuading, not threatening" (*L'Osservatore Romano*, March 24, 1950). The first edition of this book was published in 1934 entitled *Consideraciones Espirituales*. Since then it has been reprinted many times, with a total of 3,591,000 copies in 39 languages. English editions published by Scepter Press (New York and London).

Holy Rosary. A book of meditations on each of the fifteen mysteries of the life of Christ and the Blessed Virgin, which one contemplates when saying the Holy Rosary. The first edition also appeared in 1934. A total of over 573,000 copies have been published in 18 languages.

Conversations with Msgr. Escriva. A number of magazines and newspapers asked Msgr. Escriva questions about Opus Dei, dealing with the topics of greatest interest to their respective readers. The first edition was published in 1968. Since then more than 300,000 copies have been published in seven languages.

Christ is Passing By. This book is a collection of some of the many homilies given by Msgr. Escriva throughout his life. They constitute a profound and attractive exposition of Christian doctrine and life. His style combines theological depth with clarity of exposition. The first edition was published in 1973. It has since had a total printing of nearly 400,000 copies in eleven languages.

Friends of God. A second collection of 18 homilies in which the author's warm and filial conversation with God is centered on the theme of the Christian virtues. This book is in the same intimate and direct style as the earlier collection of homilies. It was first published in 1977. Since then a total of 291,000 copies have been published in eight languages. The foreword is by Bishop Alvaro del Portillo, the present Prelate of Opus Dei.

The Way of the Cross. A posthumous work of Msgr. Escriva that is the fruit of his meditation on the scenes of the Passion of Our Lord. It has been prepared to aid prayer and to increase our sense of sorrow for our sins and of thanksgiving to Christ who has redeemed us with the price of his blood. Since its appearance in 1981, 306,000 copies have been printed in ten languages.

Furrow. A new posthumous work. "Like *The Way*, *Furrow* is born of Msgr. Escriva's interior life and experience with souls. It was written with the intention of fostering and facilitating personal prayer. Its character and style are not those of a treatise in systematic theology, although its rich and profound spirituality encapsulates a soaring theology" (from the foreword by Bishop Alvaro del Portillo). The first edition was published in October 1986. 276,000 copies in seven languages have been published to date.

The Forge. *The Forge* is the latest posthumous work to be published. "*The Forge* is a book of fire. Reading it and meditating on it can bring many souls to the forge of divine Love and enkindle within them a zeal for holiness and apostolate because this was the desire of Msgr. Escriva" (from the foreword by Bishop Alvaro del Portillo). It was first published in October 1987. There are now 256,000 copies printed in six languages.

Love for the Church. Homilies on the Church which help deepen the reader's love for and service to the Church. Published in 1990, over 18,000 copies have been printed in three languages.

La Abadesa de las Huelgas. A penetrating study of an extraordinary case of quasi-episcopal jurisdiction exercised by the abbess of a famous convent in Burgos, using the original sources and documents. First published in 1944; a third edition appeared in 1988. (Only available in Spanish).

(All the above are available from Scepter Press, 481 Main Street, New Rochelle, NY 10801.)

PRAYER

for private devotion

O God, You granted your servant and priest Josemaria 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 of 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 glorify your servant, Josemaria, and through his intercession, grant me the favor of . . . (here make your request). Amen.

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

In accordance with the decrees of Pope Urban VIII, we declare that there is no intention of anticipating in any way the judgment of the Church, and that this prayer is not intended for public use.

We are grateful for the many letters we receive. They are a testimony of a private devotion with which so many persons the world over pray to God through the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God, Josemaria Escriva. We are able to include in the *Bulletin* only a small selection from among them. They describe events of vital importance as well as simple anecdotes.

We also wish to express our appreciation to all those who send contributions. These contributions are used to defray printing and distribution costs of the *Bulletin*, which is free of charge. They also help further those apostolates that stem from Msgr. Escriva's love for souls. Tax deductible contributions should be sent to the *Bulletin on the Life of Msgr. Escriva*, 330 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10025.

Please use the enclosed envelope and make checks payable to *Woodlawn Foundation*.

Our readers are invited to send us the names and addresses of others who they think would like to receive the *Bulletin* or prayer cards with the prayer for private devotion.

BULLETIN ON THE LIFE OF MSGR. ESCRIVA

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