

such as our own strength, ideas, or plans. The Lord knows all of this and yet tells us: I am the Shepherd that you can trust. Can there be anything more effective than God's own strength?

Blessed Alvaro often prayed an aspiration along these lines, a clear outpouring of his trust in God: "Thank you, forgive me, help me more." These words express gratitude for the good things we do not deserve, recognition of our personal weakness, and a humble request for the strength needed to reach the greatest happiness possible, union with God. These words are also among the first that mothers teach their children. Let us ask God for a childlike heart,

knowing ourselves incapable of doing anything without the help of our Father God. During a family gathering, Saint Josemaría once referred to his personal need for God's grace, saying that he lived "with outstretched hands," begging our Lord for alms.

Let us pray, through the intercession of Don Alvaro, that our trust in God's love for us may grow deeper every day, just as his did. Thus we can better understand that the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is the one who guides us and fills our life with supernatural fruit, which always comes to us through the motherly mediation of Holy Mary. Amen.

## Articles and Interviews

### Interview About World Youth Day in Panama, *Zenit*, Italy (January 28, 2019)

*The Prelate of Opus Dei didn't want to miss the great gathering of young Catholics from all over the world in World Youth Day, celebrated in Panama from January 22nd to 27th, 2019.*

*The Prelate had a catechetical get-together with many young people,*

*mainly from the Prelature, on Friday, January 25, 2019, at the Hotel Panama. Opus Dei was founded by St. Josemaría Escrivá in Spain in 1928, and is present in 68 countries.*

*Msgr. Ocáriz participated in the Way of the Cross, presided over by the Holy Father on Friday, in the Santa María la Antigua Camp, among a number of other events during these days*

*The Argentinean priest Claudio Caruso, who was present at the historic world meeting in Panama, interviewed Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz exclu-*

*sively for Zenit. The interview is reproduced below:*

*In public discussions today, religion sometimes seems to be presented as something of the past, old-fashioned. What do you think is the best way to show young people that happiness lies in focusing their lives on imitating Christ?*

Perhaps that perception is born of a vision of Christianity as a set of precepts and obligations, or as the commemoration of past events. On the contrary, Christianity is a personal encounter with Christ's love, a love that gives the deepest meaning to each one's life. Certainly some people present religion as outdated. However, we see in our day and age many people thirsting for peace, for happiness, thirsting for God. God's action in the world is silent; it takes place in the intimacy of people's hearts, in personal relationships. I think that giving testimony to this very personal encounter with Jesus and the profound joy it produces, is a good way for young people—and for any person—to discover the happiness of living close to Christ. This has been the case since the very beginning of Christianity, as St. John wrote: "We have known and believed in the love that God has for us."

*How can we make known the marvelous virtues of our Lady, Queen of Peace, better known to young people today?*

Although only a few passages in the New Testament explicitly

mention our Lady, a careful and meditative reading of these texts can teach us a lot about our Mother. On the occasion of World Youth Day, Pope Francis is highlighting for young people Mary's "yes" to God's invitation: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38). It is a "yes" that implies an attitude of listening to God's will, a determination to put oneself at his service and the service of our fellow men and women. The Virgin Mary is a mother, she is our Mother. We will learn from her by getting to know her. In one of his books, St. Josemaría advises us to have a personal experience of Mary's motherly love: "It is not enough just to know she is our Mother and to think and to talk about her as such. She is your Mother and you are her son. She loves you as if you were her only child in this world. Treat her accordingly: tell her about everything that happens to you, honor her and love her. No one will do it for you or as well as you, if you do not do it yourself."

*How can we help young people not to become discouraged at the lack of unity among Catholics or when reading certain news items, sometimes scandalous, that have as protagonists pastors of the Church? How can we help people not to lose their peace and instead spread serenity and hope?*

On other occasions I have reminded people that it can help us

to consider that the Church is not only the group of men and women who have joined her, but above all, as St. Josemaría said, it is “Christ present in our midst; God who comes down to us to save us, calling us with his revelation, sanctifying us with his grace, sustaining us with his constant help” (*Christ is Passing By*, no. 131). Even if we, the men and women who are part of the People of God, make mistakes and err, God is with us, in his Church.

In the face of these difficulties, which are evident to everyone, Pope Francis invited all Catholics, in the month of October, to recite the Rosary daily, ending it with the invocation *Sub Tuum Praesidium*, and with the prayer to St. Michael the Archangel. This is another key aspect: offering prayer and penance is a wonderful way to love the Church and the Pope ever more effectively.

*You are urging us to ask for light to see and strength to want to do God's will. How can we help channel the enthusiasm of young people and lead them to dream high?*

Indeed, World Youth Days are a sign of the joy that marks young people who have ideals, a joy they should spread throughout the whole Church. The Pope encouraged them to transmit this enthusiasm with his famous remark, “Make a mess!” So it is something positive.

At the same time, each young person will also need help so that these days in Panama don’t remain an isolated event in their lives, but

rather help enkindle in each person the desire to deepen the true origin of that joy, which is being close to Christ. Ordinary life—with its good and less good moments—can sometimes seem arid, a desert for those whose faith is enkindled only in moments of enthusiasm. But as St. Josemaría reminds us: “There where your fellow men and women are, where your aspirations are, your work, your loves, there is the place of your daily encounter with Christ.”

Young people live their lives with great intensity, so sometimes they may find it difficult to “see” Christ who is accompanying them. Some simple and practical advice might be to read the Gospel every day for a few minutes. If they don’t have that habit, they can start with the Gospel of St. Mark, which is short and direct. Those few minutes can have a great impact on their life.

## *Letting Yourself Be Surprised by a Good Father, an Article in Avvenire, Italy, and La Razón, Spain (January 26, 2019)*

“When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him?” (*Ps* 8:3-4). These words of the psalmist reflect