



Saint Josemaria Escriva

Founder of Opus Dei

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Declarations on the Upcoming Canonization

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- Card. **Christoph Schönborn**, Archbishop of Vienna (Vienna Cathedral, January 9, 2002)

“God has given man the power to shape reality. Blessed Josemaria took this fundamental message to task: work, understood not only as a means of self-fulfillment, but also of sanctity”.

- Rev. **Brian Kolodiejchuck**, M.C., Postulator of the Cause of the Canonization of Mother Teresa of Calcutta (Rome, February 26, 2002)

“It is surprising to see the variety of charisma and character of the saints of the Church. But when you get to know the life and spirit of each one, you discover a common denominator that unites them: to be an image of Christ, the Saint *par excellence*. This is the case of two of the greatest saints of the 20th Century, Blessed Josemaria and Mother Teresa. Among the things they have in common, I would have to mention their love for the Church, the Pope, sacramental confession (...) I would like to comment especially on one particular characteristic of Mother Teresa's charisma: her love for the poor, the sick, the dying, in other words, for those who are in greatest need of help. Mother Teresa saw Christ in them. In Blessed Josemaria's life, we can also find a great commitment to help the needy (...), an effort of social commitment to help improve the condition of all human beings (...). The poor, the sick and the destitute were his weapons in his battle to start Opus Dei. In both the cases of the Founder of Opus Dei and Mother Teresa, the root of their commitment was their faith, which led them to discover Christ in each person”.

- Card. **Camillo Ruini**, General Vicar of His Holiness for the dioceses of Rome (Basilica of Saint Eugene, January 9, 2002)

“*Duc in altum*. With this horizon, the spirit of Blessed Josemaria is a strong reference point upon entering the new millenium. The life and works of Josemaria offer us guidance so as not to lose sight of the first and fundamental ‘pastoral priority’ the Pope has pointed out for the Church: holiness”.

- Prof. **Guzmán Carriquiry Lecour**, Vice-Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Laity (Rome, February 26, 2002)

“The announcement of the upcoming canonization of Blessed Josemaria Escriva has been a motive for much thanksgiving for me. He has been the father and teacher of many on the path to holiness and apostolate; an untiring promoter of the apostolic responsibility of all the faithful, especially of the lay faithful, in all their activities and the spheres in which they live. His guidance and intercession enrich the whole Church and help to renew fruitful desires of sanctity and apostolate all over the world, for the greater glory of God and in order to serve all men”.

- Card. **Joachim Meisner**, Archbishop of Köln (Cathedral of Köln, January 19, 2002)

“Beatifications and canonizations are a *de-privatization* of the person who becomes part of the common heritage of the Church. Blessed Josemaria is and always will be the Founder of Opus Dei, but he now belongs to all of us in the Church. Therefore, we all rejoice with the members of Opus Dei because he will soon be canonized”.

- **Mdm. Carla Cotignoli**, the Focolari Movement (Rome, February 26)

“We share in the great joy of Opus Dei for the canonization of Msgr. Escriva de Balaguer. As the Pope has said so many times, ‘charisma are the gifts of God and the hope of men’. The charisma of the Founder of Opus Dei, which is the search for holiness in work and ordinary life, becomes an even greater legacy for the Church. At the beginning of the new millenium, precisely when the Pope had declared the need to live a ‘high standard of ordinary Christian life’ in *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, the beauty and relevance of the Holy Spirit’s gift of holiness shines with greater clarity, so that together with other charisma of our times, lay men and women may contribute more efficiently to the renewal of the world of work, politics, economy, art and communications, and restore the soul of society in all her different spheres”.

- Card. **Norberto Rivera**, Primate Archbishop of Mexico (Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico City, January 9, 2002)

“This long awaited announcement has filled the whole world with a special joy, and especially so for us Mexicans. I am also happy that Our Lady of Guadalupe has again united Juan Diego and Josemaria Escriva: both pilgrims of Tepeyac with a great love for Our Lady. She has united them on their path to the altars, since they were both declared Venerable on the same day in 1990, when the decree on their heroic virtues were recognized”.

- Msgr. **Ricardo Ruotolo**, Director of the *Casa Sollievo dell Sofferenza* and **Gerardo Di Flumeri**, Vice-postulator of the Cause for the Canonization of Padre Pio (S. Giovanni Rotondo, April 26, 2002):

“We thank our Lord for the gift his holiness John Paul II has wanted to bestow on us this year with the graces of the canonizations of Blessed Padre Pio de Pietrelcina and Blessed Josemaria Escriva. This happy coincidence presents these extraordinary figures of the 20th century for veneration by the faithful all over the world and singles them out as spiritual guides and witnesses of a faith that rediscovers its most authentic values and projects them into the hearts of future generations”.

- Card. **Jaime Sin**, Archbishop of Manila, the Philippines (Cathedral of Manila, January 9, 2002)

“But perhaps more important than these and the many other miraculous cures, are the countless interior conversions attributed to his intercession. So many people were moved by Blessed Josemaria's message of discovering God in the circumstances of ordinary life. Blessed Josemaria is indeed a powerful intercessor before God. I encourage you to turn to him for your spiritual and material needs”.

- Mother Superior of the **Discalced Carmelites of Coimbra** (Coimbra, February 2002)

“As Cooperators of Opus Dei for the last decades, we want to express our joy for the upcoming canonization of Blessed Josemaria. This joy is shared by Sister Lucia, who reiterates what she declared for the beatification of the Servant of God” (The Fatima visionary had met Blessed Josemaria in person and encouraged him to start the apostolic work of Opus Dei in Portugal).

- Card. **Antonio María Rouco**, Archbishop of Madrid, Spain (Cathedral of Almudena, Madrid, January 9, 2002)

“We give thanks to the Lord and ask, God-willing, that in this year we may soon see the day when the Church canonically recognizes the sanctity of Blessed Josemaria. May the Lord grant the Prelature, its priests and faithful, and the whole Church the grace to celebrate the event in a way that it can be seen that it is Christ passing by”.

- Card. **Frédéric Etsou**, Archbishop of Kinshasa, Congo (Cathedral of Our Lady of Congo, Kinshasa, January 9, 2002)

“Violence and division are frequently caused by intolerance and rejection of differences. It would behoove us to discover and live Blessed Josemaria's message: a constant call to learn to live and work together, without regard for race, ethnicity, religion, social status, political views (...). On the occasion of this

anniversary, we ask God to grant us, through the intercession of Blessed Josemaria, peace for our souls, peace for our country, peace for the Church and, finally, peace for the world”.

- Msgr. **Domenico Sigalini**, Vice-president of the Italian Azione Cattolica (Rome, February 26, 2002)

“Holiness, as taught continuously by the Church, is a gift from God to everyone. That someone has endeavored to convert it into a living experience for the lay person, in his profession, in the midst of his social relationships, in ordinary life - which is often seen as a pain by many who are only too eager to enjoy and distract themselves - is an even greater gift from God. Blessed Escriva had perceived God's dreams for mankind and had understood that Jesus became man, suffered, died and resurrected so that each man and each woman in their state as lay persons, can be priest, prophet and king; in a word, holy. Lay sanctity is what we seek daily in Azione Cattolica. Therefore, we joyfully and gratefully receives this gift of a new saint from God to the Church to deepen and share this vocation with all”.

- Card. **Jean-Marie Lustiger**, Archbishop of Paris, France (Church Saint-Honoré d' Eylau, Paris, January 8, 2002)

“Josemaria Escriva is one of those timeless figures who, in some way, shows the attentive observer what the Spirit is carrying out in the Church. The precise task that Providence entrusted to Blessed Josemaria coincides with one of these messages: to put into practice the call of all Christians to holiness”.

- Msgr. **Juan José Omella**, Bishop of Barbastro-Monzón (Barbastro, native city of Blessed Josemaria, December 22, 2001)

“This event brings with it a great joy and pride for the city in which he learned the Christian faith; it is a motive of profound satisfaction for the diocesan Church. It is also a stimulus for those who live in this diocese because it reminds us that we are all called to holiness which it is a attainable goal”.

- Dr. **Giancarlo Cesana**, from *Comunione e Liberazione* (Rome, February 26, 2002)

“*All work is an occasion for sanctity.* With this phrase of Blessed Josemaria, which is at once an affirmation and a proposal, I feel the attraction and the force of Christianity, which is an experience that transforms and gives meaning to any circumstance in our lives, even those that are routine or prosaic”.

- Card. **Franz König**, Emeritus Bishop of Vienna (December 21, 2001)

“Escriva belongs to the treasure of the Church... I met Blessed Escriva de

Balaguer in Rome during the Second Vatican Council. I had been told that he promoted the role of lay people in daily life, in their professions, so that the Church could act in the world through them without the clerical collar nor the Episcopal sash. In my opinion, he was a man who transmitted an enormous greatness of spirit. He was interested in the Council, and I heard he travelled vastly and was interested also in the apostolate of lay people. He spoke a lot about what was happening all over the world, and I soon realized that he was an example of the living Church”.

- Msgr. **Adam Exner**, Archbishop of Vancouver, Canada (Holy Rosary Cathedral, January 9, 2002)

“Saints are not people who plan and organize their particular style of life and perfection, and follow it strictly on their own strength. Saints are people who love and trust God to the point that they let him guide them and lead them where He wants. From his youth and throughout his life, Blessed Josemaria allowed God to guide him and shape his life. And the theme of his prayer was always ‘May what you desire, and not what I want, be done’. Blessed Josemaria did not plan his life; he always had God for his guide”.

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