



Saint Josemaría Escrivá

Founder of Opus Dei

[Home](#) - [Documentation](#) - [Accounts](#) - February 14, 1930 and 1943: New lights on founding Opus Dei

February 14, 1930 and 1943: New lights on founding Opus Dei

From October 2, 1928, when St Josemaría clearly “saw” the mission God was entrusting to him, his life had only one meaning: to fulfill God’s Will, to be a faithful instrument for opening up the way to holiness in the middle of the world that God showed him: a path of holiness for ordinary Christians, through their work. **The divine pathways of the earth have opened up, he said, and explained: Simply Christians. Leaven in the dough. Our task is to do ordinary things, naturally. The means: daily work. All are to be saints!**

At first he thought this path was for men only. **There will never be women in Opus Dei. No fear!** he wrote at the beginning of February 1930. But on February 14, while he was celebrating Mass, he discovered another defining aspect of God’s Will: contrary to what he had thought, God wanted there to be women in Opus Dei.

It was as though the light that he had received less than a year and a half before, October 2, 1928, had been so powerful, so blinding, that he had not been able to see every part of what God wanted. Now that his eyes had become accustomed to the light, God was showing him some aspects that he had never dreamed of.

That February 14, 1930, the Lord made me feel what a father feels when God sends him another child unexpectedly. And ever since then I feel obliged to love you more, he said, speaking to his daughters in Opus Dei; **I see you as a mother sees her youngest child.**

That way of acting is typically divine; God normally lets us know what his Will is little by little, often wrapped in darkness, so that we practice the virtue of faith. First he shows us one aspect of what he wants, and then another, and later still, another. This shows God’s wisdom and his patient way of teaching us. The founder of Opus Dei said: **If, in 1928, I’d known what was waiting for me, I would have died. But God our Lord treated me like a child. He didn’t hand me the full weight all at once, but led me on little by little...**

February 14, 1943: The Priestly Society of the Holy Cross

God had sown in St Josemaría's soul a deep apostolic zeal for priests. At the same time, there was a pressing apostolic need, because the more his apostolate grew, the more clearly he saw that it needed priests who were formed in the spirit of Opus Dei and who could dedicate themselves to it full-time.

For some time before February 1943, three members of Opus Dei had been preparing intensively for the priesthood, following a plan of studies approved by the Bishop of Madrid, although St Josemaría did not yet know when or by what title they could be ordained. He kept praying and asking the Holy Spirit for light, so that he could find a solution that would enable him to unite the secular character that was essential to Opus Dei, with the ordination of priests who were necessary for the service of a universal apostolate. The problem was finding the most appropriate canonical formula.

That situation of uncertainty was also resolved "in God's own style". **After I had looked for the canonical answer and failed to find it**, wrote the Founder of Opus Dei, **our Lord chose to give it to me, precisely and clearly**. In the morning of February 14, 1943, while he was celebrating Mass in an Opus Dei women's center in Madrid, a light shone in his mind. And when I finished celebrating, he recalled, **I drew the seal of the Work, the Cross of Christ embracing the world, set in the heart of the world; and I could talk about the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross**.

Once again God had shown him the way. That was the solution he had sought for so long without finding it: the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross. It was a solution that responded fully to the light he had received on October 2, 1982, when he had seen Opus Dei with lay-people and priests working in close cooperation.