



# Saint Josemaría Escrivá

Founder of Opus Dei

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## Pallerols commemorates the Rose of Rialp

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*About 200 people took part in the Holy Mass celebrated in the church at Pallerols on 21 November 2004 to commemorate the day when Saint Josemaría Escrivá found a rose at Rialp.*

The Association of Friends of the Pallerols-Andorra Way organised a celebration for the second year running in memory of the night of 21-22 November 1937, when Saint Josemaría found a gilded wooden rose on the floor of the church in Pallerols, Lleida, Spain. The Founder of Opus Dei was assailed by doubt about whether he was doing right to escape from religious persecution at that point in the Spanish Civil War.

Very early in the morning of 22 November, while he was praying for the answer, he found a rose on the ground. It was a sign from our Lady that he should go ahead with his plan to get across the Pyrenees and re-enter Spain on the other side of the battle-front, where he would have greater freedom of movement.

The rose probably came from the altar-piece, or from a statue of Our Lady of the Rosary, both of which had been burned in August 1936.

### **Local feast of a universal saint**

The idea for the celebration came from the parish priest at Ponts and the faithful at Pallerols, and was carried out with the help of the Association of Friends. An oil-painting has been placed in the church showing Saint Josemaría against the background of the Rialp Woods, with two well-known buildings in the area: Vilaró House and the church at Pallerols itself.

The Mass was presided over by Msgr. Bonifici Fortuny, parish priest of Ponts and of the Rialp barony. Msgr. Pere Pascual and Msgr. Enric Moliné also concelebrated. During his homily, Msgr. Moliné talked about the liturgical feast of

Christ the King which was being celebrated that day, and about the episode experienced by Saint Josemaría in the church of Pallerols, highlighting “the Saint’s resolute decision to do God’s Will at every moment, above and beyond any other project.”

People from nearby villages such as Ponts also came to the Mass, as well as families from Lleida, Barcelona, Igualada, Terrassa, and several other Catalanian towns. The Mayor of the Rialp barony was present, and, among others, the current owners of the local “*massos*”, which played such a part in this period of Saint Josemaría’s life: Cal Vilaró, Cal’Empordanès, Cal Guardiola, and Cal Solé in Pallerols; Cal Riart, Cal Marsol and Cal Flores in Politg; Cal Tomeu in Gualter, and others. The day, known locally as “Trobadà de la Rosa”, the Finding of the Rose, has already become a local tradition, and is celebrated in honour of our Lady of the Rosary of Pallerols, and Saint Josemaría.