

St Josemaría's special gifts

The Sydney Catholic Weekly reports on a homily by Cardinal Edward Cassidy drawing attention to Saint Josemaría's special gifts

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The second feast day of Saint Josemaría Escrivá, founder of Opus Dei, was marked this year with a Mass celebrated by Cardinal Edward Cassidy on June 25 at St Mary's Cathedral.

Considering the significance of St Josemaría's life for the whole church, Cardinal Cassidy drew attention to the special gifts that the saint received from God.

“Such gifts to a chosen few are not given by God for their personal sanctification alone, but are directed to the whole Christian family,” Cardinal Cassidy said. “The one chosen is called to be a gift to the whole community, and as part of that world-wide community, we give thanks in our Mass this evening for the gift of Saint Josemaría and for all that he has done for so many of our brothers and sisters in helping them to find Christ and live out their Christian calling.

“The process for canonisation not only recognises this basic understanding of a saintly Christian life, but also aims to offer the Christian family examples of

Christian men and women who are able by their lives to inspire, teach and encourage others to follow them along the road to perfection.”

St Josemaría’s legacy to the church is one of the best documented of all the saints. It includes many books by the saint which have sold in their millions around the world. They include three books containing short points for spiritual meditation – The Way, The Forge and Furrow – as well as two collections of homilies – Christ is Passing By and Friends of God. Other publications by St Josemaría include Holy Rosary, The Way of the Cross, Conversations and In Love with the Church.

The message of Saint Josemaría was summed up by Cardinal Cassidy during his homily in which he drew attention to the need for lay Catholics to sanctify themselves in their ordinary life.

“St Josemaría became an instrument in God’s plans for an immense family of Christians called to seek perfection in the midst of their daily life and preoccupations...” Cardinal Cassidy said.

“As Christians in the world, what God asks of you above all is to bring the loving face of Christ to all those with whom you come into contact. In a few words it means respect for all of God’s children, solidarity with those who are marginalized or persecuted, and help to those in need.”

The need for all Catholics to live personal poverty and charity in a particularly exacting way was a common theme in the works of Saint Josemaría. Other common themes included the richness of ordinary life, freedom as a gift from God, human virtues, humility, detachment, marriage as a Christian vocation, love for the Pope and the

bishops and “going to God through Mary”.

All of St Josemaría’s works are available in books published in many languages around the world, and can now also be found in a searchable form on the internet at <https://www.escrivaworks.org>.

In his homily, Cardinal Cassidy emphasised that St Josemaría’s message calling lay Catholics to seek sanctity in the ordinary events of their lives, particularly through their professional work, family life and friendships, was both new and old.

“The message of Saint Josemaría Escrivá brings the Gospel call to perfection in a new way into the life of our Christian family,” he said. “The manner is new, the message 2000 years old...”

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