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# **Statement of the Catholic Prelature of Opus Dei in response to the ABC Four Corners program of 30 January 2023**

01/02/2023

We have a deep respect for the women and men who featured in the ABC Four Corners program of 30 January 2023. We were saddened to hear of their experiences and of the way they felt about them.

Opus Dei wishes to respond to the issues raised about study centres.

1. Opus Dei does not in any way condone the practice of “recruitment”. Individuals freely choose to join Opus Dei after a considerable period of prayerful discernment of their personal vocation. Naturally, for some people that discernment may begin in youth, with the involvement of their parents. No one can formally join Opus Dei before the age of 18. Like in many other Catholic institutions, that decision is only confirmed after several periods of further discernment.

2. What occurred at a study centre for women in 2016 went beyond appropriate boundaries for members of Opus Dei. As soon as the Prelature of Opus Dei became aware of such events, an external investigation was commissioned. The findings of that

independent investigation were accepted by the Prelature and appropriate action was taken. To protect the privacy of both persons, further comment on this matter cannot be made.

3. The dramatisations of the use of corporal mortification, including excerpts from *The Da Vinci Code* movie, do not represent reality in Opus Dei. We point to information provided on our website.

Over the last 60 years, thousands of Australians have benefited from initiatives offered by Opus Dei, including personal and spiritual guidance, retreats, formation in the Catholic faith, courses that help married women and men, service projects to Pacific countries and indigenous communities, and volunteering to assist the vulnerable/sick, aged and homeless. The Prelature of Opus Dei promotes the

message that work, family life, and other ordinary activities are occasions for spiritual union with Jesus Christ.

*For further information, contact Opus Dei Communications Office*

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