

opusdei.org

## **Statements about Alvaro del Portillo**

During the conference held in Rome March 12-14 for the centennial of Alvaro del Portillo, a number of people testified to his influence on their own life and on the life of the Church.

03/19/2014

**Pope Francis sent a telegram, via his Secretary of State, for those taking part in the conference:**

On the occasion of the conference dedicated to the Venerable Bishop Alvaro del Portillo, first Chancellor of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, for the centennial of his birth, the Supreme Pontiff Francis sends his best wishes, with the hope that you will duly highlight the precious example of the life of the faithful follower and first successor of the holy founder of Opus Dei and promoter of this Pontifical University for the service of the Church. He was a zealous priest, who combined an intense spiritual life founded on faithful adhesion to the rock who is Christ, with a generous apostolate as a pilgrim throughout the whole world, following in the footsteps of Saint Josemaria, and worthy of the biblical phrase from the Book of Proverbs: “Vir fidelis multum laudabitur” (Prov 28:20).

His Holiness exhorts you to imitate his humble, cheerful, hidden and

silent life, but a life that was also determined to give testimony to the perennial newness of the Gospel, by announcing the universal call to holiness and the furthering through one's daily work of the salvation of all mankind.

The Holy Father, while asking you to pray for him and for his ministry, invokes the light of the Holy Spirit for a fruitful work of reflection. And he warmly imparts to your excellency the Rector and to the professors his apostolic blessing, including those taking part in the conference and those attending the Pontifical University.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State for His Holiness

**Mother Maria de Jesus Velarde,  
Foundress of the Daughters of Holy  
Mary of the Heart of Jesus (Spain)**

“I am happy to attest that, in my institute, Don Alvaro is an intercessor to whom we have frequent recourse. We entrust to him both our small and great needs, which are sometimes material but also often spiritual ones.

“Alvaro del Portillo, in my opinion, is the holiest person I have known throughout my 88 years of life. I give thanks to God for the immense gift of having permitted me to know him, and to receive his advice, affection and help.”

### **Kiko Argüello, initiator of the Neocatechumenal Way (Spain)**

The initiator of the Neocatechumenal Way stressed Bishop Alvaro’s “love for the Church and all that the Holy Spirit inspires in her, to assist her in her mission to seek the salvation of all men and women.

“I had the opportunity to get to know Msgr. Alvaro del Portillo during two of the General Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops that I attended as an Auditor. I always found him very warm and friendly, and more than once he told me of his deep admiration for all that the the Neocatechumenal Way is doing for the Church. I ask our Lord, through the intercession of the soon to be Blessed Alvaro del Portillo, for the needs of the Church, of Opus Dei and of the Neocatechumenal Way.”

**Bishop Massimo Camisasca, bishop of Reggio Emilia-Guastalla; from 1985 to 2012 Superior General of the *Fraternity of Saint Charles Borromeo* of Communion and Liberation (Italy)**

“I had the good fortune to accompany Don Giussani during a visit to Bishop Alvaro del Portillo in his residence in Rome. Another

priest present there was Angelo Scola, future archbishop of Milan.

“Msgr. Alvaro felt it was his duty in the Church to lend support to Don Giussani in moments that were not at all easy for him. I am referring especially to the decade of the 80’s in the past century, when the life of Communion and Liberation had the support of Pope John Paul II, but was not always viewed positively by some bishops and lay people. Msgr. Escriva’s successor listened very attentively, and always tried to speak words of encouragement, confidence and hope.

What most impressed me about Don Alvaro was his calm and serenity, his deep trust in God, and his freedom of judgment.”

**Catalina Bermúdez Merizalde,  
professor of philosophy  
(Colombia)**

“Don Alvaro gave great importance to our formation in Rome. He encouraged us to study seriously philosophy and theology in order to be united to the Pope and the Church as the Church wants to be served, and to live a deep unity of life.”

### **Cardinal Julian Herranz (Vatican)**

“I visited with Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI a few days ago, in his residence in the Vatican Gardens. He was well aware of the upcoming beatification of Don Alvaro and he told me: ‘How marvelous! He worked with me for a number of years as a Consultor for the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. What a good example for all of us!’”

### **Ruben A. Laraya, director of the Center for Industrial Technology and Enterprise (Philippines)**

“In 1987, while on a pastoral trip to the Philippines, Don Alvaro was

deeply hurt on seeing the country's social and economic situation, and the enormous social divide and disparity between rich and poor, the result of chronic corruption. He urged us to react, and gave us a key guiding idea: to reduce poverty, short-term solutions are not very effective; what's needed is a deep work of education. From our meetings with him arose what is today the Center for Industrial Technology and Enterprise, in Cebu, aimed at providing professional training for the most needy.”

**John Coverdale, professor of law at Seton Hall University**

“The very special graces that God granted Escriva required a confessor with a deep interior life, a spiritual life in harmony with his own, as well as the insight and humility needed to guide him both in daily events and when receiving great mystical

graces. The autobiography of Saint Teresa of Avila shows how difficult it is to find a confessor like this. Saint Josemaria found him in Don Alvaro.”

---

pdf | document generated  
automatically from [https://opusdei.org/  
en-au/article/statements-about-alvaro-  
del-portillo/](https://opusdei.org/en-au/article/statements-about-alvaro-del-portillo/) (08/15/2025)