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The first Guarani-Spanish edition of “The Way”

A new Guarani-Spanish edition of “The Way” was unveiled in Asunción, Paraguay, on December 13. St. Josemaría’s spiritual classic has now been published in 45 languages, with 4,500,000 copies printed. The Paraguayan Department of Education declared the volume of “educational interest” for use in the primary and secondary school system.

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The presentation ceremony occurred in the auditorium of the Juan de Salazar Cultural Center and included education and cultural figures from the city of Asunción. It was sponsored by Editorial Atenas, the book's publisher, and by the Asociación Paraguaya Universitaria de Cultura (APUC).

The first speech, discussing the linguistic context of the new work, was given by Professor Aída de Torres de Romero, president of the National Academy of Bilingualism of Paraguay. She spoke about the historic evolution since the colonial era of the native Paraguayan Guaraní language, which has been maintained primarily at the oral level. According to the data of the last census, carried out in August of 2002,

33 percent of the Paraguayan population speaks only Guarani, and 57 percent speaks both Guarani and Spanish, making Paraguay the only South American country that is primarily bilingual. Aída de Torres de Romero evaluated this work of translation as “a valuable literary contribution, not only for its content and message,” but also for the enrichment of the Guarani tongue in its written dimension.

Subsequently, Rev. Virgilio Rodi, Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese of Asunción, spoke on the human and spiritual message that “The Way” transmits. The third address was that of the General Coordinator of the translation of the book, Professor José Ramírez of the Higher Institute of Education of Paraguay. He related several incidents that occurred during the work, which has taken years due to the difficulty presented by the linguistic differences of the

two languages. Upon concluding his presentation, he read the author's prologue in Guarani and Spanish.

Rev. Víctor Urrestarazu, Vicar of the Prelature of Opus Dei in Paraguay, then sketched a brief profile of St. Josemaría Escrivá. The event closed with a reading of Resolution 10748/02 of the Department of Education, declaring the translation to be of “educational interest” for the whole primary and secondary school system for teaching Guarani. This resolution makes it possible for the work to be included in the future in the official curriculum of the schools of Paraguay.

“Tape”: serving evangelization

During the International Congress “The Greatness of Ordinary Life,” which took place in Asunción on November 3, 2002, Adalberto Martínez, the bishop of San Lorenzo, described the translation of “The

Way” into Guaraní as “a great step in the process of evangelization and the defense of cultural values of the country.” He said that this book will make the new saint more accessible to the people, for in Paraguay there are many who speak only Guarani. “The teachings of St. Josemaría will thus arrive to many environments needing a deep spirituality, imbued with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Before around 800 people, in the Great Hall of the Autonomous University of Asunción, he affirmed that “the message of the Holy Spirit for our time, which has arrived through the charisma of St. Josemaría Escrivá, will reawaken Christian commitment among many of our sisters and brothers, who will also discover the greatness of ordinary life.”

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