

Archbishop of Vancouver: St. Josemaria is not just for Opus Dei

Here is an article published in the BC Catholic (July 6, 2009) on the Mass of St. Josemaria celebrated in Vancouver by Archbishop J. Michael Miller.

2009-07-22

St. Josemaria Escriva is the saint of Opus Dei, but he also belongs to the whole Church because of his inspiring life of holiness and the

wealth of his spiritual teaching, Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, told supporters of Opus Dei and others.

Archbishop Miller offered Holy Mass on the feast of St. Josemaria at Holy Rosary Cathedral, and in his homily he discussed his importance. “He is particularly dear to us because of his insights, derived from the Word of God, that each and every person is called to holiness, to the perfection of charity, in whatever vocation he or she has received from the Lord.”

At the lectern, a large picture of St. Josemaria rested amongst some colourful potted flowers as the archbishop addressed the congregation. He said the modern saint preached tirelessly about how Christians need to live lives reflecting “the mystery of the Word Incarnate.” St. Josemaria believed in living the everyday for God. He

thought work and the day-to-day events of life were opportunities to live that life closer to God.

Father Fernando Mignone, a priest of the Prelature of Opus Dei in Vancouver, said he was happy Opus Dei could celebrate St. Josemaria's feast day.

He added it's important to recognize the saint's feast day. He noted many people who aren't involved in Opus Dei ask the saint to intercede on their behalf.

"It's important they get a chance to celebrate, too," he said. "We want to give thanks to God for giving us a founder who was so holy."

One of the hallmarks of St. Josemaria is dedication to confession. Father Mignone said the saint's feast day sees big changes in people's lives, and many return to confession after many years away. Pope John Paul II

said Opus Dei members have the gift of confession.

This Mass was no exception; the lineup for confession was so long Father Mignone spent the whole time in the confessional.

“One of St. Josemaria’s special charisms is that a lot of people go to confession on his feast day and there are many conversions,” he said.

Alfonso Salas, Treasurer for the Westbrook Education Fund, a charitable organization that funds Opus Dei, enjoyed the ceremony. “He’s a modern saint and it’s great to honour him,” Salas said.

At the Mass, seven priests concelebrated along with Archbishop Miller: Father Glenn Dion, rector of the cathedral; Father Joseph Soria, an Opus Dei priest; and Fathers Terrance Larkin, William Ashley,

Lawrence Donnelly, Eugenio Aloisio, and Anthony Ho.

St. Josemaria Escriva was born in Spain in 1902. He entered the priesthood at the age of 23 and devoted his entire life to priestly ministry. He founded Opus Dei in 1928 and Pope Pius XII granted “definitive approval” to the organization in 1950. Opus Dei is Latin for “Work of God.”

St. Josemaria was beatified in 1992 and canonized in 2002. He sought God in everything, saying, “All the ways of the earth can be an opportunity to meet Christ.”

He’s a modern saint and it’s great to honour him.

This article appeared in the BC Catholic (Vancouver) on July 6, 2009

BC Catholic, by Malin Jordan

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(2026-01-13)