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## **Blessed Alvaro Relic in Vancouver Parish**

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## Christi, one of the largest in the Vancouver Archdiocese.

The relic area features a portrait of the Blessed, the reliquary in a clear-glass case, and a framed authentication just above an altar in a lateral chapel. In his welcoming remarks to those present, Fr. Hamilton explained the reasons behind setting up a relic area for this holy bishop.

“Several years ago, in my desire to beautify the sanctuary of Corpus Christi, I designed an ambitious plan with liturgical consultants. But this project had to be shelved when the archdiocese announced in 2013 that churches, schools and other facilities would be upgraded structurally to withstand any serious tremor or earthquake. At this point, all fundraising efforts at the parish became focused on the archdiocesan priority. Faced with the daunting task

of raising millions of dollars for a new school, church and parish centre, I turned to the successor to St. Josemaria at the head of the Prelature of Opus Dei.”

Fr. Hamilton had read various biographies and come away impressed that Bl. Alvaro had a knack for raising funds in his pastoral endeavours at the side of the founder. Particularly in the 1950s, he was charged with finding money to pay construction workers on a regular basis, and did so, faithfully and punctually. Fr. Hamilton continued, “Alvaro’s gifts and talents, placed at the service of his deep faith in God’s plan, made him a perfect intercessor for the seismic upgrade fundraising.”

The local pastor mentioned how on 27 September 2014, on occasion of the holy bishop’s beatification, Pope Francis made his own Bl. Alvaro’s

prayer: “Thank you, I’m sorry, help me more.” Following the Pope’s example, Fr. Hamilton suggested that those present could make this prayer their own.

Before proceeding to venerate the relic, he said, “We clearly have our work cut out for us, but St Josemaria said often ‘dream and your dreams will fall short.’ So, let us, with the supernatural friendship and assistance of Bl. Alvaro, dream big and let nothing get in our way until we’ve completed this task.”

Fr. Hamilton then incensed the reliquary and carried out a blessing of the faithful. Then about a dozen people went up to kiss the relic. To conclude, all joined in a Marian hymn.

Among those attending, Alfonso Salas had assisted in the material installation of the relic area. He said afterwards, “I cannot express how

happy I am at this moment. I'm a great fan of Bl. Alvaro, and hope many more people in Vancouver begin praying to him.”

Corpus Christi Parish now honours two 20<sup>th</sup> century saints, as there is a first-class relic of St. Teresa of Calcutta for public veneration on the other side of the nave.

Fr. Hamilton thinks the first-class relic of Bl. Alvaro's may be the only one of its kind venerated publicly in the Americas.

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