

# **The Church in Canada celebrates the “Saint of the Ordinary”**

In 2002 Pope John Paul II declared Saint Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei, to be the “saint of the ordinary”. Saint Josemaría has helped thousands of souls throughout the world give divine value to apparently very ordinary realities of everyday. This past June 26 solemn Masses marked his feast day in Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

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In Quebec City, **Cardinal Marc Ouellet** presided at Mass attended by 500 people in the **Cathedral of Notre Dame**. The Cardinal described Saint Josemaria as a prophet of the universal call to sanctity in the Church and a pioneer in promoting the role of the laity in the middle of the world through the sanctification of ordinary work.

He described the discreet presence of faithful of Opus Dei in the world who seek to act like leaven in the midst of the dough. The “dough” rises because of the strength of their witness and because they have learned how to cultivate an intense spiritual life in the middle of secular activities. He pointed to the fact that they do this by acquiring a continuous formation which includes a deep knowledge of

the mind of the Church. In this way they are able to have a durable and coherent impact around them, especially in the ethical issues that our society is currently debating.

The Cardinal also saw in the message of Saint Josemaría a fruitful path for the future of ecumenism. More than commissions and meetings, it is the saints who will really bring about the unity of the Church. Saints inspire a popular piety, they make sanctity popular as did Saint Padre Pio, Mother Theresa of Calcutta and Saint Josemaría Escrivá.

**Msgr. Luigi Ventura**, the Apostolic Nuncio, addressed a large crowd of worshippers in the **Cathedral of Ottawa**. In his homily he evoked that day in 1928 when Saint Josemaría first saw Opus Dei: “What did he see? In an ineffable way, he saw people of every nation and race, of every age and culture, seeking and

finding God right in the middle of their ordinary lives, their work, their family, their friendship. He saw people who looked for Jesus in order to love Him and to live His holy life until they were completely transformed and made into saints - saints in the world: tailor saints, baker saints, office saints, factory worker saints. Saints, seemingly like everyone else around them, but deeply identified with Jesus Christ".

In the **Cathedral of Montreal** , the Mass was presided by **Msgr. Anthony Mancini** , auxiliary bishop of Montreal, who was accompanied by Msgr. Frederick Dolan, the regional Vicar of Opus Dei in Canada. In his homily, Msgr. Dolan described one of the ingredients of Christian leaven: secularity. "We feel chez nous in the world, precisely because our Father God has created it. The Lord considers the world as his vineyard and has placed us there in order to

cultivate it.” (...) Secularity leads us to consider the important issues of our society as our issues, and leads us to express our convictions with confidence, even when our ideas might not be in fashion at the moment.”

The Feast of Saint Josemaria was celebrated throughout the world. This year the Prelature has begun its apostolic work in Latvia, Croatia and Slovenia.

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