

With the Prelate in Toronto

A brief summary of the days spent in Toronto by Monsignor Ocariz during his pastoral visit to Canada and the United States

08/14/2019

Tuesday, August 13

On Tuesday, August 13, Msgr. Fernando Ocariz spent his first full day in Toronto. He visited Ernescliff College, a university residence located on the campus of the University of Toronto for a get-

together with students and young professionals.

After being welcomed, the Father spoke about the importance of Christian formation saying that formation does not mean being informed about abstract concepts, ideas and values; rather, it is most fundamentally our being formed according to the likeness of Jesus Christ, our being identified with Jesus Christ. He also addressed the topic of facing difficulties in our Christian vocation explaining that we should never view the challenges as negative. Quite the contrary, the greater the challenges, the more the grace of God is there to help us, which means we should embrace those challenges.

Before the first question, Peter, an engineer, presented the Father with a crystal sea eagle (or erne), the principal symbol on Ernescliff

College's crest, to commemorate Ernescliff's 25th anniversary. Daniel, a high school student, presented the Father with a Toronto Raptors jersey emblazoned with "El Padre", and a Raptors championship cap. He then asked how young people like him can contribute to the mission of Opus Dei, given that we are still in the beginnings of Opus Dei in Canada. Several other questions were part of the conversation at this get-together, including helping those in need, balancing a demanding work schedule while leading a solid Christian life, making commitments, finding one's vocation, helping others get closer to the faith, and even about the Prelate's own vocation to Opus Dei.

The Father spent the morning at Kintore College, a beautiful university residence educational centre which opened on the campus of the University of Toronto in 2012.

Kintore hosts a wide variety of events for women of all ages. There he met with members of the Work, and their families and friends.

Amid jokes, songs, personal stories, and magic tricks, the Father stressed the benefits of being happy at all times. Joy enables us to have an open heart, and to be better equipped to deal with the ups and downs of everyday life.

After lunch, he visited Hawthorn School, the only independent, Catholic-inspired, all-girl school in Toronto. Founded 30 years ago by a group of parents and educators, Hawthorn now provides integral education in daycare and summer camps as well as excellence in elementary and secondary education.

The Father met with the Boards of Directors and staff of both PEV and

Hawthorn and encouraged them in their service to women of all ages.

He also met with high school and university students later in the afternoon. At that time, Karina told him how she had come closer to God through working in the Kintore College Hospitality Services as a student and how much it had helped her to be able to ask all of her questions in her classes on the Catholic faith. Now that she has become a Catholic, the Father encouraged her to show others the beauty of the faith through her ever-increasing joy.

Rebecca spoke about attending the Beatification of Guadalupe Ortiz de Landazuri this past May in Madrid and how she had appreciated hearing from others about their journey towards God. The Father emphasized how God has a plan for each one of us and how we should

trust that His Plan will make each of us very happy.

Irene asked for prayers for Anchor and other summer camps which are taking place in different parts of Ontario. The Father encouraged her to help her friends by helping them to discover how to use their time well and by speaking to them about the great dignity of each person.

In the evening, a group of about 200 persons received the Father at the Fairview Library Theatre in Toronto.

Patrick, a father of three boys, asked about how to deal with the suffering afflicting his immediate family, as well as how to love the crosses that we are asked to carry. Efraim, who recently left his job as a banker to work in the trades, asked the Prelate how he could convince his friends about the equal dignity of all professions, even those that are less prestigious. The Father replied by

reminding the audience of the innate value of human work. Rex, a teacher and father of seven children, asked how he could help his immediate family understand his commitment to the means of formation in the Work. The Father suggested that Rex show his family that he is happy to attend the means of formation. Seeing him happy, they will see the good it brings him, and that is what they will want for him.

Before the end of the get together, Mike, a family father, dedicated and performed music on the piano for the Father who then imparted his blessing on all those present. Afterwards, some families were invited to greet him.

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