

A Global Gathering with the Prelate

Not being able to travel to Rome for the UNIV congress turned out to be a great opportunity for many university women from all over the world, who took part in a live online get-together with the Prelate of Opus Dei.

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On Sunday March 28, for the first time since these meetings began 53 years ago, young people from all over the world were able to have a

live virtual get-together with the Prelate of Opus Dei, Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz. University centers from 64 different countries connected through the same link to a worldwide Zoom meeting.

“Since you guys can't come to Rome this year, we're bringing Rome, the Father, UNIV, and a bunch of other countries straight to your living room,” said Rosario and Monica, who opened and led the conversation. In the chat below the meeting, greetings from Lebanon, Switzerland, Chile, Spain, Congo, and the Philippines appeared before the event began, along with Mexican cheers, applause, and countless messages in French and English.

The Prelate of Opus Dei began by greeting the students and sharing his joy at the opportunity to meet with them. He stressed that, although face to face time is better, “this

opportunity brings me great joy, although logically, meeting in person is better. The advantage is that before, not everybody could come to Rome and now many more can connect and participate. In a way, you are all present in Rome.”

Before turning the meeting over to the young women who were to intervene, he referred to the Gospel of the day and the donkey that was Jesus’ throne when entering into Jerusalem. He pointed to the example of Saint Josemaría and invited everyone to bring our Lord with them wherever they go.

Around the World

Brenda, from Brazil, said that together with some friends, after discovering Saint Josemaría on the internet, they had begun activities of the Work in their city, Joao Pessoa. Ana Marta, from Mexico, asked for advice on how to avoid getting

carried away by activism and how to grow in her relationship with Jesus. Constanza, who is Italian, said she came closer to the Work when she moved to Holland and started living in a residence of the Work there.

Mahlako intervened from South Africa and raised the question of the challenges of development in her country, and the contribution that the sanctification of work can make to it. Oriana described the difficulties Venezuela is going through, and also spoke about the suffering of so many immigrants and refugees around the world who are forced to leave their home country. Sonia spoke in Arabic from Jerusalem while Teresa greeted the Father from Australia on her birthday.

Monsignor Ocáriz made reference to how they were all united through the same online connection, and said “this is a way of staying connected, but there is a connection which is

much more important, which is prayer, which is not only asking God for others and their needs. Prayer is that too, but prayer is communication with Our Lord, with God."

At another point in the meeting he reminded them that "to form a family you have to love people." And he explained: "This love is not a matter of pure sentiment, of sentimentalism, but a real love, serving, a desire to really help. Thinking very much of everything in Jesus Christ. You will remember very well that the Lord himself says to the Apostles, 'I am in your midst as one who serves.' This is how God made man is; he lowers himself to serve."

Before finishing, the microphones were turned on and greetings were exchanged in many differing languages. The Prelate left, but the get-together continued. And the

party went on for another hour. They had come together to be with the Father, but it turned out that they were all in one big living room, as big as the whole world.

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