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# **Do members of Opus Dei practice mortification?**

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Like other Catholics, members try to incorporate an element of sacrifice into their lives. In accord with its emphasis on finding God in everyday activities, Opus Dei encourages small sacrifices like carrying out one's duties conscientiously, putting others' needs before one's own, and finding a smile in annoying circumstances. In addition, as recommended by the Catholic

Church, members practice small physical mortifications occasionally, such as giving up certain items of food or drink. Within this spirit, numeraries and associates (celibate members) sometimes practice traditional Catholic penances such as using the cilice and discipline. These are practices that Catholics have used for centuries and are commonplace in the lives of the saints, for example: St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thomas More, St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Padre Pio and Blessed Mother Teresa. The motivation for these voluntary penances is to imitate Christ and to join him in his redemptive sacrifice (cf. Matthew 16:24), and they can also be a way to suffer in solidarity with the many poor and deprived people in the world.

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