

# **I met Blessed Alvaro Del Portillo**

My name is Edith Katama. I was introduced to Opus Dei in the early 1980's when we were in exile in Kenya as a family. By the time we returned to Uganda in 1986, I was a member of Opus Dei and the only member in Uganda.

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In 1989, Miss Olga Marlin called to inform me that the Prelate of Opus Dei, Father Alvaro, was coming to Kenya. She suggested that I buy a

wooden image of Our Lady, take it with me to Kenya so that I could have an audience with the Father and have the wooden image blessed as “Regina Ugandae.”

Father Alvaro was delighted to see my daughters (Agnes and Angela) and I. I was so impressed when he said: “Hello Edith!” as if we had known each other for ages! Someone handed the wooden image of Our Lady to the Father. He blessed it as “Regina Ugandae” and kissed her feet. Miss Marlin kindly translated his fluent Spanish for my daughters and I. Father Alvaro emphasized the importance of seeking sanctification in our ordinary circumstances and of winning souls for God, among other things.

The Father then asked me if I would like to say something. In response, I said that the time was right for Opus Dei to go to Uganda. I paraphrased

Luke, chapter 12 verse 49 by saying that the fire of Our Lord should be enkindled in Kampala and then to the rest of Uganda. He listened keenly to me as I spoke. After a short silence, he asked me for my pen, walked to a table in the sitting room, and wrote the following words: “*Ignem veni mittere in terram et quid volo nisi ut accendatur. Regina Ugandae ora pro nobis!*” (I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled. Queen of Uganda, pray for us!)

My daughters and I had a photograph taken with the Prelate (as a family we treasure this photo dearly; it hangs on the wall in our living room). He then asked my daughters and I to kneel down so that he could give us a blessing. We willingly obliged! Angela commented that in her opinion the blessing was spiritually uplifting! Two weeks later

she attained a scholarship to do her Masters degree in Milan, Italy.

I shall always be thankful to God for the extraordinary blessing and privilege of being in the presence of such a holy and loving man!

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