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Video: Prelate of Opus Dei speaks about Guadalupe Ortiz

Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz responds to some questions about the future Blessed Guadalupe Ortiz de Landáuzuri in the days leading up to her beatification.

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Could you talk about who the future Blessed Guadalupe is, and what she was like?

Guadalupe was one of the very first women who joined Opus Dei. She was a woman with a strong but kind character, with a bit of an adventurous spirit too. She had the ability to face apparently difficult matters with serenity and joy. She was an optimistic person. But what I would primarily emphasize about her is the spiritual aspect of her life. Guadalupe responded generously to what she saw God was asking of her: to dedicate her life to seeking holiness in ordinary life, at work, and in her relationships with others. That's how she became a saint.

What was the “formula for sanctity” in Guadalupe’s life? What elements does it contain?

Guadalupe knew how to combine seemingly difficult things: her professional work — she was a chemist, and dedicated herself to teaching and then to research — with

dedication to doing Opus Dei, also in the years when she lived in Mexico. In fact, she was one of the first women who began the work of Opus Dei there, which was also a remarkable adventure.

She knew how to balance these elements and find God — according to the spirit she learned from Saint Josemaria — at work and in relationships with people. Saint Josemaria called this "unity of life": different activities and spheres in a person's life that seem independent, but that attain a strong unity because the person is looking for God in everything. This necessarily includes serving people and being concerned about others. This is how she became holy.

Holiness is not about becoming perfect by the end of one's life, like an angel, but rather about reaching the fullness of love. As Saint

Josemaria said, it is the struggle to transform work, ordinary life, into an encounter with Jesus Christ and a way of serving others.

What does Guadalupe's beatification mean for the Church and, more specifically, for Opus Dei?

For the Church, recognizing that a person is holy — first through their beatification and later, God willing, canonization — implies affirming that holiness is one of God's many graces. The Church has recognized in so many people that the call to holiness, a call God addresses to everyone, is not a utopia but a reality. There are so many people who become holy in very different ways, throughout the whole Church.

For Opus Dei, this will be the first lay person to be beatified. Both the founder, Saint Josemaria, and his successor Blessed Alvaro, have been

beatified, but they are both priests. Meanwhile, most people in the Church and therefore in Opus Dei, which is part of the Church, are lay people. Therefore it's a way of saying that holiness is really for everyone, not only for people who have a priestly or religious vocation, but for all people.

The fact that she is a woman is significant. I think it's nice to highlight that she is the first lay person and also the first woman of Opus Dei to be beatified. From the point of view of the call to holiness, women and men are equal in terms of effectiveness in the service of the Church, of the transmission of the Gospel, etc. Each one has his or her own special qualities and personality, sensitivity and grandeur. But holiness is for everyone.

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