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## **Javier Echevarría and the Sick**

On 12 December 2016, Bishop Javier Echevarría, prelate of Opus Dei for 22 years (from 1994 to the day of his death), passed away in Rome. On this anniversary, here is a brief reflection from Msgr. Iñaki Celaya.

12/12/2022

This is an excerpt from another, more extensive, article about the former prelate. Don Iñaki lived and worked closely with him from 1954,

first as rector of the Roman College of the Holy Cross and later as spiritual director of Opus Dei.

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Affection, concern, and care for the sick occupied an important place in his life, prayer, and mortification; we were able to see this first-hand, especially after his election as prelate.

Not a day went by without him mentioning the sick from different regions in gatherings and conversations with his children, so that we could pray for and take care of them as treasures of the Work.

Frequently, almost daily, he would receive news about a sick person in some part of the world: he would ask for prayers, write them a letter (thousands are preserved), send them his affection and blessing... and

ask them to offer their illness for his intentions.

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*Thank you, Father (Javier Echevarría, 1932 - 2016). A video published a few days after he passed away.*

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He asked the directors to keep him informed about the evolution of the illness; he visited all those who were ill or hospitalized for surgery in Rome personally. Hundreds of us have grateful memories of these visits, and many have recorded the words he addressed to them on these occasions in writing.

On his apostolic trips, he did the same with the sick people in each city. I particularly remember one of

his last trips to Burgos, when he spent a long time with a person suffering from a very advanced degenerative disease; we do not know whether he understood anything, but he encouraged him to accept the disease with love for God and to offer his pain for the Pope. Several of the people present were deeply moved by the conversation.

Every time he went to Pamplona, for medical care or other reasons, he dedicated long periods of time to visiting patients in the Clínica Universidad de Navarra and thanking the doctors and medical staff for their work.

Those who accompanied him more closely in the days before his death at the Campus Bio-Medico Hospital were also able to observe this characteristic of his personality in his interest in the other patients at

the hospital and in the doctors and  
medical staff.

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