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Statement from Opus Dei's prelate about the canonization

Bishop Echevarría, on the announcement of Josemaría Escrivá's canonization: "In the saints we can always recognize the spiritual fruitfulness of the Church, sowing holiness all over the world."

10/12/2002

Rome -- "The Pope has just announced the dates of the

ceremonies for the canonization of nine people: a secular priest, five religious men, two women religious and a layman. Each one lived in differing times, countries and circumstances. Each one has his or her own personality. But all of them have features in common. In the saints we can always recognize the spiritual fruitfulness of the Church, sowing holiness all over the world through the witness of the Christian lives of her children.

"Padre Pio, faithful to his Capuchin charism, reminds us of the depth of God's love for us, communicated through the Church in the sacraments, especially Penance and the Eucharist. Juan Diego was the first to receive the visit of Our Lady of Guadalupe, at whose shrine each year millions of pilgrims go to pray to Mary.

"In the life story of Josemaría Escrivá we see the beautiful imprint of Christian parents, from whom he received the priceless inheritance of the faith; of bishops, who gave him their support to carry out his work of evangelization; of numerous priests, religious and nuns, with whom he kept up a cordial friendship throughout his life; and of thousands of lay men and women who were to transform into reality his message of the sanctification of ordinary work in the midst of the world.

"For this, all I want to say today is, Thank you! I wish to express my gratitude to the Blessed Trinity, for sending us the present of the saints; to the Church, the family of the children of God, united by the bond of charity; to the parents, sisters and brother of Blessed Josemaría; to all the priests, religious, laity, men and women, who in some way played a part in his formation. Thanks too,

from the depths of my heart, to all the poor and the sick who generously gave the only thing they had, turning their suffering into prayer for the priestly work of the founder of Opus Dei.

"I think it is only right to remember at this time those thousands of people, whose names, in many cases, are not even known to us. And it is also a splendid occasion to feel anew the responsibility not to deprive those around us of our prayer and charity, because all of us are called to be saints."