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# **Biography of Encarnita Ortega**

In 1941 she attended a retreat preached by St. Josemaria Escrivá in Alaquas (Valencia) and received from God the grace of a vocation to Opus Dei.

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Encarnita Ortega was born on May 5, 1920, in Ponte Caldelas (Pontevedra), Spain.

She spent her childhood and youth in Galicia and Aragon. In 1941 she attended a retreat preached by St.

Josemaria Escrivá in Alaquas (Valencia) and received from God the grace of a vocation to Opus Dei.

Along with other young women, she initiated the apostolic work of Opus Dei with women, encouraged by the Founder, who showed her the sanctifying value of ordinary work. She very quickly made this teaching part of her life, and it was precisely in and through work that she forged her Christian virtues.

In 1946 she moved to Rome, and from there, with faith in God and love for souls, worked to further the expansion of Opus Dei throughout the world. She had a great spirit of service that led her to forget about herself and to attend to the spiritual and material needs of those around her. She returned to Spain in 1961 and worked in various apostolic initiatives. The final years of her life were spent in Valladolid.

In 1980 she was diagnosed with cancer. For fifteen years, despite her illness, she continued with her normal pace of hard work, heroically loving God's will and teaching others the sanctifying value of the Cross.

Her continuous dealing with God, through an intense life of piety, led her to convert human friendships into genuine encounters with Jesus Christ. One can say that countless people have come closer to God and found meaning in their lives through their dealings with Encarnita. She died a holy death in Pamplona on December 1, 1995.