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Blessed Josemaría Escrivá: As Patron Saint for All

On June 26, 2002 the feast Day Mass of Blessed Josemaria Escriva in Lagos was held at the Church of Assumption, Falomo. It was celebrated by Msgr. Robert Lozano, the Regional Vicar of Opus Dei in Nigeria.

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Blessed Josemaría Escrivá as the patron saint for everyone who desires to become a saint in everyday

life, was the hinge of Msgr. Lozano's homily at the feast day Mass of the Blessed. June 26th 2002 in the Centenary year of the founder of Opus Dei was a special feast day because come October 6th, he will become St. Josemaría Escrivá.

Since his going to heaven, Blessed Josemaría now belongs to the entire Church, and belongs in a special way to all those who heed his teaching to find God in their daily occupations.

The first reading of the feast day Mass which took place at the Church of Assumption, Falomo, Lagos was taken from Genesis, where in 2:15, there is an apt summary of what God desires for mankind: "The Lord God took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden to cultivate and take care of it".

As Blessed Josemaría taught tirelessly, and as reiterated by Msgr. Lozano, God created man to work,

and so to seek his holiness precisely by sanctifying his work. Work thus done well for love of God becomes prayer most pleasing to God.

The Vicar of the Opus Dei Prelature in Nigeria then went on to give examples of people whose processes of canonization are now on, thanks to their heeding Blessed Josemaría's teaching: the Guatemalan doctor, husband and father of a family, Ernesto Cofino, the Swiss layman Tony Zwiffel; Guadalupe Ortiz de Landazuri, the Spanish lady who spent most of her life as a household caterer. Closer home to Nigeria, Msgr. Lozano then mentioned Dr. Jeremy White, associate professor of history at the University of Lagos who died in April 1990, here in Lagos. Dr. White found holiness through his work as a teacher and an intellectual, a great example to his fellow Nigerians.

As Msgr. Lozano further remarked, the many Nigerians who will be attending Blessed Josemaría Escrivá's canonization in Rome on October 6th should prepare now very well in a spirit of daily conversion. That pilgrimage should mark a genuine turning point in the life of each one. Recalling the words of Bishop Alfred Martins of Abeokuta diocese, the canonization of Blessed Josemaría during the Centenary year of his birth will be most appropriate for this son of the Church who loved God above all things.

Similar Masses were celebrated in other cities and towns of Nigeria and the world over.