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Cause of Canonization Opened for Married Couple in Opus Dei

On February 19, the Archbishop of Madrid opened the cause of canonization for Paquita Dominguez and Tomas Alvira, a married couple with 8 children.

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In the presence of their eight living children, Cardinal Rouco said that the Alviras are "a twentieth-century example of the need to proclaim and

bear witness to the evangelization of the family." He recalled John Paul II's insistence that one of the key objectives of the new millennium would be to highlight the holiness of Christian married couples, saying that "the witness of Christian families is extremely important."

Tomas Alvira joined Opus Dei in 1947, and Paquita Dominguez in 1952. Prof. Alvira held a university chair in science, while his wife was a high school teacher.

Faithful to the spirit of Opus Dei, they transmitted to their children and to many other people an example of Christian life through their "bright and cheerful home," as St. Josemaria Escrivá urged.

The postulator of the cause, Jose Carlos Martin de la Hoz, pointed out that "the Church now asks us to show that their lives in the Prelature of Opus Dei, during so many years, was

truly heroic." A tribunal has been set up to collect the evidence needed "to determine whether this couple can be considered an example and intercessors for all Christians," the postulator said.

Up to now, only two married couples have been beatified: Ludovico and Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi (2001), and the parents of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, Louis Martin and Zélie Guérin (2008). Responding to John Paul II's encouragement, several processes of married couples are currently under way in various dioceses, including two in Spain and one in Mexico.

This act marked a new step in the preliminary diocesan phase of the process that began on February 14, 2008, when the Cardinal of Madrid issued a decree on the reputation for sanctity and favors granted through the intercession of the Alviras.

In due course the process in Madrid will reach the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome, and the Holy See will determine whether sufficient evidence exists to declare the sanctity of these Servants of God.

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