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Fidelity and Creativity

Pope John Paul II, in his recent Apostolic Letter on the coming Jubilee, has issued an energetic call to “penance and reconciliation,” encouraging everyone to make an “examination of conscience.” As one who has just assumed an important responsibility, do you see anything about Opus Dei that needs to be changed? Anything needing correction? New messages to pass on to the faithful you have been entrusted with?

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Like so many other Christians, the members of Opus Dei end each day taking a few moments for examination of conscience—each on his own and in accord with his own schedule. In Scripture we read that even “the just man sins seven times a day.” Calling to mind our mistakes and faults leads us to ask for pardon. We are all aware of being sinners who strive earnestly to love Jesus Christ, with the assurance that God’s merciful love gives us the strength to take on the work of each day.

With respect to changes in Opus Dei, may I remind you of the simple fact that when I was born, Opus Dei had already been founded—a matter that belonged entirely to the Founder. It is the responsibility of his successors to be faithful to that original mission

and to use their initiative to develop the legacy that has been entrusted to them.

History doesn't stand still, so creativity is in order. True creativity lies in applying the spirit. On a recent trip to Lithuania, a country and a people to whom we owe special regard because of what they have suffered, I verified the impact of Opus Dei's message about work in a country where so many people are demoralized. In Israel, too, Opus Dei's spirit of openness to everyone, without regard for race or creed, is very attractive. And in Japan, the idea of finding God our Father during the work day is received like water in a desert. That rich variety of experiences stimulates us to keep going forward, always guided by fidelity and creativity.

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