

# History of Opus Dei in New Zealand

Opus Dei began its apostolic activities in New Zealand in 1989. Over the years the message of St. Josemaria has inspired hundreds of New Zealanders.

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Opus Dei began its apostolic activities in New Zealand in 1989 at the invitation of the late Bishop Gaines of Hamilton diocese.

The first educational centres that entrusted the spiritual and doctrinal orientation of their activities to Opus Dei were Rimbrook Study Centre, for women, and Greywood Study Centre, for men. A priest of Opus Dei was appointed the Catholic chaplain for The University of Waikato, a position still entrusted to a priest of the Prelature.

There are approximately 50 members of Opus Dei in New Zealand, including two priests. Bishop Richard Umbers, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Sydney, was the first New Zealander to be ordained a priest for the Prelature in 2002.

In 1998, other educational centres established in Auckland asked the Prelature of Opus Dei for spiritual and doctrinal orientation of their activities.

A large number of non-members participate in activities of a spiritual nature throughout New Zealand. Evenings of recollection, classes on the Catholic faith, retreats and seminars are conducted in Auckland, Hamilton, Whakatane and Wellington.

Some of the youth centres located in Auckland that have entrusted the spiritual and doctrinal orientation of their activities to Opus Dei (such as Glenrowan Study Centre and Fernhall Study Centre) organise yearly service projects to countries such as Fiji, India and The Philippines. Projects involve young people carrying out refurbishment work, painting and delivering programs on nutrition, health and sports.

The Vicar of Opus Dei for New Zealand and Australia is Father Iñigo

Martínez-Echevarria, based in Sydney, Australia.

Enquiries about Opus Dei and its apostolic initiatives in New Zealand can be directed to the Opus Dei Information Office on 07 856 2734.

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