

# **Response to Gareth Gore's book "Opus" published by Simon & Schuster in October 2024**

The book “Opus” gives a false picture of Opus Dei based on distorted facts, conspiracy theories and outright lies.

10/01/2024

In mid-2022, financial author Gareth Gore requested copies of correspondence between Opus Dei's

founder, St. Josemaría Escrivá, and Spanish banker Luis Valls Taberner (1926-2006), an Opus Dei member. Gore claimed to be writing a biography of Valls Taberner. Over the next 18 months, he was also granted access to numerous interviews with members across various countries.

However, early in 2024, when the promotional material for *Opus* surfaced, it became apparent that the book was not a biography of Valls Taberner as originally stated, but an attack on Opus Dei. During his 18-month collaboration with Opus Dei, Gore never discussed the serious and false allegations that are central to his book. Despite his earlier written promise to give Opus Dei the opportunity to respond to any controversial claims, neither the author nor the publisher allowed Opus Dei to fact check the manuscript before publication.

In any event, the book is littered with twisted facts, errors, conspiracy theories and even outright lies, making false accusations on the basis of biased and misread sources.

Opus Dei is part of the Catholic Church and its mission is to help people from all walks of life to seek holiness in their daily lives, promoting the message that work, family, and everyday events are opportunities to grow closer to Christ and to make him known to others. We deny the claims made in Gore's book. Below are some of the most egregious errors and misinterpretations.

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## **Key Misrepresentations in *Opus***

**1. Political and Business Influence:** Gore suggests that Opus Dei exerts control over its members' political

and business dealings. This is false. Members try to be faithful to the teaching of the Catholic Church, including on moral matters. Apart from these teachings, they, like other Catholics, hold whatever views they think are best, and their opinions legitimately differ. In their political activities they represent neither the Catholic Church nor Opus Dei. Opus Dei does not take political positions other than the stances of the Catholic Church.

## **2. Intentions and Motives of**

**Members:** The book asserts that Opus Dei members are driven by a thirst for power and wealth, and the ambition to control people. This is a complete distortion of the truth. Our members are moved by spiritual convictions—dedicating their lives to God and the service of others. The book presents a distorted version of the founder's life, interpreting every

action through the lens of twisted motivations.

**3. Finances and Foundations:** Gore falsely alleges that Opus Dei hides its activity and finances in a network of foundations and corporations which it controls in order to avoid liability and to secretly extend its influence. The Prelature of Opus Dei is established in different countries following the law of those countries. For example in the United States it is incorporated as a religious corporation in New York State; in Britain it is represented by the Opus Dei Charitable Trust. The majority of its expenses go toward supporting its clergy and the operations of its headquarters.

Members of Opus Dei, in cooperation with others, run many nonprofit organizations that do not belong to Opus Dei but which receive pastoral attention from it (a list of those in the

USA for example can be found [here](#) and [here](#)). Their relationship with Opus Dei is publicly known and stated explicitly in promotional materials. They operate these institutions with their own freedom and responsibility out of a desire to serve others and spread the Christian message and the spirit of Opus Dei. They do so with the conviction that all baptized individuals are called to be agents of evangelization. Within the Church there are many apostolic initiatives founded by the free choice of the laity and guided by their prudent judgment.

As is normal for nonprofits, the funding for these organizations comes from the donations of individuals who believe in their mission and from grants from foundations, some of which are set up by members of Opus Dei and friends to support the apostolates of the Prelature. (In the USA,

foundations such as Woodlawn Foundation and Rosemoor Foundation. Other foundations also in the USA such as the Clover Foundation, the Association for Cultural Interchange, and the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross Foundation receive donations that are primarily used to support nonprofits abroad which receive pastoral assistance from Opus Dei).

**4. Ownership of the Catholic Information Center:** The Catholic Information Center (CIC) in Washington, D.C. is a corporation of the Archdiocese of Washington, which appoints the Board of Directors. Since 1992, a priest of Opus Dei has served as the director at the archdiocese's request.

**5. Human Trafficking Allegations:** One of the most reckless contentions in the book is the allegation of Opus Dei's involvement in human

trafficking. This allegation is deeply offensive not only to Opus Dei but also to real victims of human trafficking. Opus Dei categorically denies that it has ever been involved in human trafficking of any kind.

## **6. Banco Popular and Financial**

**Claims:** The book falsely implies that Opus Dei was involved in the management of Banco Popular. This is completely untrue. Opus Dei does not get involved in commercial activities. Luis Valls Taberner, who was president of the Bank between 1972 and 2004, was a member of Opus Dei and used part of his remuneration to help initiatives inspired by Opus Dei. Luis Valls also helped create several foundations, some of which received donations from directors of Banco Popular, who waived their compensation as board members in favour of social action. These foundations provided funding to various initiatives

promoted by Opus Dei or persons related to it, as well as to many others not linked to Opus Dei; all this aid was made in a transparent and legal manner, and generally in the form of loans that have been repaid. Thirteen years after the resignation of Luis Valls as President of the Bank, Banco Popular had a liquidity crisis and was sold to Banco de Santander. Opus Dei had no role in these events.

## **7. Distortion of Sacramental**

**Practices:** The suggestion that Opus Dei priests violate the seal of confession is a very serious allegation, given that such a violation is punishable by excommunication under the Canon Law of the Catholic Church. We strongly deny that this happens in Opus Dei and are firmly committed to investigate any allegation that is made in this regard. Any such transgression, if reported, would be thoroughly investigated and dealt with.

**8. Commitment to Protecting Vulnerable Populations:** Opus Dei is deeply committed to safeguarding minors and vulnerable adults in all its activities. Opus Dei works under the authority of the Church and follows its universal guidelines, including rigorous codes of conduct for personnel. Any credible allegations of misconduct are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. In addition, in order to promote healing processes in the case of serious and reasonable complaints of an institutional nature, the Prelature has established a protocol.

For additional resources for clarification click [here](#). For media enquiries or further clarification, please contact:

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