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Blessed Alvaro: Inspiring social undertakings to lift people out of poverty

PHOTO GALLERY: 12 May 2023
Mass. Blessed Alvaro del
Portillo was in the Philippines
on January 22 to February 1,
1987. He left with a message for
us to continue promoting
projects to help those who have
less in life.

05/10/2023

May 12 is the liturgical feast of Blessed Alvaro del Portillo, successor of Saint Josemaria Escriva as head of Opus Dei from 1975 to 1994. He was beatified in 2014.

He arrived in the Philippines on the evening of January 22, 1987. His first trip the morning after, was a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in New Manila, Quezon City. Yearly, after his beatification in 2014, Masses are organized in this church to celebrate his feast.

Rev. Father Julio Dieguez, the Regional Vicar of Opus Dei in the Philippines, was the main concelebrant in the Mass of Friday evening, 12 May 2023.

Concelebrating were: Father Ray Sotelo, the Provincial Superior of the Discalced Carmelites; Fr Diony Balute, OCD, the parish priest; assistant pastors Father Peter Paul

and Father Richard; and LaSalette Father Juan Carlo Tiu. (See photo gallery above).

Father Dieguez had lived with Blessed Alvaro for some years in Rome. In his homily he narrated how he witnessed his being a “good shepherd” to all with his exemplary life of fidelity, affection, and prayer.

Another pilgrimage Blessed Alvaro made in 1987 was to the Shrine of our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage. Bishop Nolly Buco, auxiliary bishop of Antipolo, celebrated the feast day Mass of Blessed Alvaro there on Thursday evening, 11 May 2023.

In one of Blessed Alvaro’s general audiences in 1987, after having travelled to Cebu, he observed: “My daughters and sons, I have seen enormous wealth and enormous poverty.”

He urged people to continue establishing and running social undertakings, like technical-vocational schools, in order to help the youth who are unable to afford a college education to earn a living.

Upon his return to Rome, he sent an Italian delegation to Cebu to help set up a technical school in Talamban, which is now the Center for Industrial Technology and Enterprise (CITE).

Since it opened in 1991, CITE has graduated thousands of industrial technicians from the Visayas and Mindanao. It is recognized by industry as one of the leading technical schools in the Philippines.

Other projects inspired by Bishop del Portillo include the Family Farm Schools, the Banilad Center for Professional Development in Cebu, the Development Advocacy for Women Volunteerism (DAWV), the

Family Cooperation Health Services Foundation (Famcohsef), and the Philippine Food Bank.

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