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# Opus Dei and women

"The Da Vinci Code" falsely depicts Opus Dei as having unenlightened views on women and their role in Church and society. The reality is quite otherwise.

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**Bishop Javier Echevarría, Prelate of Opus Dei:** "I give thanks to God often on seeing how the women of Opus Dei work in every sector of society: running corporations and hospitals, working in fields and in factories, holding university chairs

and teaching in schools; they are judges, politicians, journalists, artists; others dedicate themselves exclusively, and with equal passion and professionalism, to the work of the home. Each one follows her own path, conscious of her dignity, proud of being a woman and earning the respect of all, day after day.” From an interview published in *El Mercurio* (Chile), January 21, 1996.

**Prof. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese:**

“Opus Dei has an enviable record of educating the poor and supporting women, whether single or married, in any occupation they choose. In the end, Opus Dei exists to bring dignity and respect, sanctity and purpose, to the work – in all its guises from the humblest to the most prestigious – upon which our world depends.” From a statement given January 3, 2004.

**Ms. Maria Valdeavellano:** “Women play a role in the government of Opus Dei at every level – local, national, and international – including the election of the Prelate.” From a statement given January 14, 2004. Valdeavellano is the Regional Delegate for the Prelature of Opus Dei in the United States.

**St. Josemaría Escrivá, founder of Opus Dei:** “I see no reason why one should make any distinction or discrimination with respect to women, when speaking of the laity and its apostolic task, its rights and duties. All the baptized, men and women alike, share equally in the dignity, freedom and responsibility of the children of God.... For many reasons, including some derived from positive law, I consider that the distinction between men and women with respect to the juridical capacity for receiving Holy Orders should be retained. But in all other spheres I

think the Church should recognize fully in her legislation, internal life and apostolic action exactly the same rights and duties for women as for men.” From an interview published in *Palabra* Spain, October 1967, and republished in *Conversations with Josemaría Escrivá*, Scepter Publishers, 2002.

**St. Josemaría Escrivá:** “The presence of women in the whole range of social life is a logical and entirely positive phenomenon, part of the broader phenomenon to which I referred earlier. A modern democratic society has to recognize women's right to take an active part in political life and it has to create conditions favorable for everyone who wants to exercise this right.” From an interview published in *Telva* (Spain), October 1967, and republished in *Conversations with Josemaría Escrivá*, Scepter Publishers, 2002.

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