

# **Regarding the Premiere of the Docuseries “Heroic Minute. I Also Left Opus Dei”**

The entertainment platform HBO Max has released a docuseries featuring interviews with women who recount negative experiences during their time in Opus Dei, many of which have already been made public. In response to the feelings they express, the experiences they share, and the suffering they describe, we reiterate our sorrow and

respect, which we also extend to any others who may feel identified with these accounts.

02/07/2025

As members of Opus Dei, we seek, amid our mistakes and successes, to do good and to imitate Jesus Christ in our daily lives. Nothing could be further from our intentions than to cause harm to others, especially to those who are or have been part of the Work, with whom we are often connected through bonds of family or friendship. In cases where harm has nonetheless been caused, we are deeply sorry. In many cases, criticism from former members has prompted institutional reflection, leading to improvements and changes in the way we do things, and we have personally asked for forgiveness. We hope to be able to do the same in

situations where this has not yet been possible.

Beyond certain processes that have been addressed over the years (shortcomings in vocational discernment; overly demanding standards for living out a vocational commitment; lack of sensitivity in understanding the burden such demands placed on some individuals; occasional deficiencies in accompaniment during the process of leaving), **the focus of the docuseries does not reflect the reality of Opus Dei.** It portrays the Work in a biased manner, as an organization driven by malicious intent to harm others. This depiction is false and completely opposed to the teachings of Saint Josemaría, as can be seen in the lives of thousands of people who experience or have experienced fulfillment and personal growth in Opus Dei, finding God in their ordinary life.

The documentary also makes other allegations that the Prelature categorically denies: there has never been any form of uninformed or forced “recruitment,” “trafficking,” “reduction to servitude,” or an “abusive system” designed to manipulate people. These claims are distortions of the formation or vocation freely chosen by some women. This narrative is driven by an Argentine lawyer, as indicated in the documentary itself, and reinforced by several “experts” known for constructing this interpretation of Opus Dei, disconnected from an authentic perspective of faith and Christian commitment.

Every vocation within the Church entails specific demands, along with the inherent challenges of the human experience. These demands are not, in themselves, a sign of a lack of freedom, and many are part of the

way of following Christ that the Church has recommended for centuries. While it is understandable that any process of disaffiliation, especially when a personal commitment has been deeply lived, can generate pain and suffering, today the majority of people who leave Opus Dei do so with support, without severing ties. In fact, many of these individuals continue to be inspired by Opus Dei's message and participate in its activities of Christian formation.

The good intentions that we want to guide our actions do not exempt us from making mistakes, and we acknowledge this with a desire to improve. As part of this process of listening and learning, protocols for healing and resolution have been established to receive and address any negative experiences, to seek forgiveness, and to make amends where appropriate. For years, we

have provided individual support, both proactively — for instance, by facilitating job transitions or reorientations for those who previously worked in formation, roles in governance, or in the administration of Opus Dei centres — and reactively, by addressing claims from people who have left the Work. These recent protocols and offices represent another step toward resolving personal grievances and restoring relationships.

The recent regional assemblies (in which over fifty thousand people, including former members, participated constructively), the upcoming General Congress, and the review of the Statutes reflect our commitment to continue listening and reflecting as an institution of the Church.

Regarding the Prelature's participation in the docuseries,

during the four years of pre-production and production, the production company never contacted Opus Dei's information offices, whether in Rome, Spain, or any other country. It was only after the series was completed that the production company requested the participation of the Prelate or another authorized representative. The conditions they proposed were not standard for a series of this nature (for example, the timelines were unworkable). The Prelature declined to participate in a project that had been developed within a pre-existing framework and with a bias that sought only to be confirmed, without any prior indication of a genuine interest in dialogue. We would have been pleased to engage in the process, but we were only offered the opportunity to provide a last-minute response.

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## Links to additional information

- For more information about Opus Dei's activities with young people, see this interview with Lidia Via, who has been working in the Regional Advisory of Opus Dei in Spain since 2019, overseeing activities with young people.
- For testimonies from members sharing their vocational and life experiences in their own words, visit “One by One: Stories of Life in Opus Dei.”
- On some aspects of financial management in the Prelature: interview with Giorgio Zennaro, administrator of Italy.
- Some interviews with the Prelate, in which he speaks repeatedly about people who have left the Work:
  - The Pillar
  - Semana (the original interview is in Spanish;

- excerpts from the interview in English [here](#))
- El Mercurio (the original interview is in Spanish; excerpts from the interview in English [here](#))
- For clarifications on false information, half-truths, and information taken out of context by one of the journalists who participates in the docuseries, see [this fact-checking document](#).
- For more information on the claims in Argentina, mentioned in the documentary, see [this press release](#) and the website [infoycontexto.com/en](http://infoycontexto.com/en).

On the regional assemblies that have taken place in different countries: [article on the conclusion of the regional assemblies](#).

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