

St. Josemaría Escrivá parish established in Tarlac

Most Reverend Florentino Cinense, the Bishop of Tarlac, answers questions on the establishment of the new parish dedicated to St. Josemaria Escriva in Gerona, Tarlac (Philippines).

02/05/2004

**What moved you to establish the
new parish dedicated to St.
Josemaría Escrivá?**

The Diocese of Tarlac has started to establish new parishes dedicated to saints of contemporary time. These saints have experienced what we ourselves are undergoing right now. And hopefully, our faithful can relate with these saints.

St. Josemaría was chosen by me since he is the saint of “ordinariness of life”—we can encounter God in the fulfillment of our ordinary duties of daily life.

For the Diocese of Tarlac, it is also our expression of gratitude since it was one of the faithful sons of the Father, a priest of the Prelature of Opus Dei, who regularly gave us our monthly recollections. Through these years, we have sought to imbibe the teaching and way of sanctification of the Founder of Opus Dei.

And personally, I was graced and privileged to have witnessed the canonization of the Father and have

seen the many people who strive to follow his way of life.

When was the parish established?

It was canonically established on February 24, 2003 and the first Parish Priest was installed on March 3, 2003.

What is the procedure to establish a new parish?

When the pastoral need arises, that is, the population of an existing parish is already too big to constitute one parish, we can begin to consider creating a new one. We discuss the feasibility in the Presbyteral Council and confer with the Parish priest/s of the mother-Parish concerned.

How was the decision received in the Diocese? In the parish?

I would say it was welcomed and it didn't come as a surprise. Since the

year 2000, we have begun to celebrate an annual thanksgiving Mass in honor of St. Josemaría at the Cathedral. It culminated in the Blessing of the Adoration Chapel dedicated to St. Josemaría at the Cathedral in the year 2002.

When will the new Parish church be inaugurated?

There is no exact time frame that we have set. But as soon as the necessary lot is acquired and the Parish church built, we shall inaugurate it. The provisional Parish church, however, which is a barangay hall, was inaugurated on March 3, 2003.

What activities are being held now in the parish?

The Parish constitutes six (6) barangays, and they have regular weekly Masses. In the provisional Parish church, aside from the Sunday

Mass, they also have Wednesday and First Friday Masses. Every Saturday, they have regular Catechism classes.

What particular teaching of St. Josemaría, would you say, will benefit most the people in Tarlac?

It is his teaching, which was later confirmed by Vatican II, that all are called to sanctity. And that it is in the ordinary fulfillment of the duties of one's state of life that we encounter God. This is particularly important for us Filipinos, in general, since we have the tendency to dichotomize faith and our actual life. I believe that if our faithful are given the opportunity to know the Father and his teachings, it will revolutionize the way we look at and live our Faith.

+Most Rev. FLORENTINO F. CINENSE,
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Bishop of Tarlac

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