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“Everyone found a place in his heart”

On May 12, liturgical feast of Blessed Alvaro del Portillo, Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz celebrated Mass in Saint Eugene's Basilica in Rome. Some extracts from his homily and photos of the ceremony

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Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz pointed to the “peace and serenity” that Blessed Alvaro spread around him: “an aspect of his character that was more than just a feature of his

personality,” he said. “And if he was able to spread peace wherever he was, it was because he took refuge in the peace and strength of God. Don Alvaro was a good shepherd who cared for the flock of Opus Dei because he let himself be guided and protected by Jesus, the good Shepherd who knows his sheep.” Therefore, “everyone found a place in his heart and in his self-giving.”

The Prelate also stressed the need for Christians to bring peace to the world: “Let us ask our Lord, through Blessed Alvaro’s intercession, to help us to be men and women of peace. Today, when often one sees a great lack of peace in society, in the workplace, in family life..., there is an ever great need for us Christians to be, in the words of Saint Josemaria, ‘sowers of peace and joy.’ Peace in the world, perhaps, depends more on our personal struggle each day to smile, to forgive others and

not give importance to ourselves, than the great negotiations carried out among States, however important these might be.”

Referring to the Holy Father’s pilgrimage to Fatima, Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz invited those present to “go in our hearts to *Cova da Iria* in this Mass.” During the month of May, especially dedicated to our Lady, “let us also do so with the Rosary, the preferred prayer of our Lady.” “While we accompany Pope Francis on his trip, let us address our Mother with the words Pope Francis used to consecrate the world to our Lady of Fatima in October 2013: ‘Guard our life with your embrace: bless and strengthen every desire for good; give new life and nourishment to our faith; sustain and enlighten our hope; awaken and animate our charity; guide us all on the path to holiness’” (Pope Francis, Act of

Consecration to our Lady of Fatima,
13 October 2013).

Finally, he recalled a visit by Blessed Alvaro to the Portuguese shrine: “In January 1989, during a pilgrimage to Fatima, Blessed Alvaro addressed a prayer to our Lady out loud: “I know that you always hear us, but still we have wanted to come from Rome to tell you what you already know: that we love you, but want to love you more. Help us to serve the Church as she wants to be served: with our whole heart, with complete self-giving, with loyalty and faithfulness.”

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