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Guatemalan doctor on path to canonization

Ernesto Cofino, who died in 1991, was the father of five and a pioneer in pediatric research in Guatemala. He established the chair of pediatrics in the Department of Medicine of the University of San Carlos, from where he taught for 24 years.

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Cofino requested admission to the Opus Dei in 1956 as a supernumerary

member. Beginning that year, in addition to intensifying his spiritual life, he dedicated himself to tasks of human and Christian promotion, inspired in the social doctrine of the Church. This led him to establish the Pediatric Association of Guatemala, and to direct Caritas in that country for many years. He died of cancer at 92.

Cofino's process of canonization, following the "nihil obstat" of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, began July 31 with the publication of the decree of introduction of the cause, in the presence of Archbishop Prospero Penados Del Barrio of Guatemala.

The questioning of witnesses, necessary for the conclusion of the diocesan process, will be completed in a few days. The cause has received testimonies of favors attributed to Cofino's intercession from Central

America, Mexico, the United States, Australia, France, Spain and Poland.

In addition to Blessed Josemaria Escriva, three other members of Opus Dei are in the process of canonization: Argentine engineer Isidoro Zorzano, Catalan student Montse Grases and Spanish doctor Eduardo Ortiz de Landazuri.

Zenit, Vatican City, March 19, 2001

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