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# Centenary of the birth of Fr John Galarraga

29 January 2020 will be the centenary of the birth of Fr John Galarraga, who started the apostolic work of Opus Dei in Britain in 1946

24/01/2020

**Juan Antonio Galarraga** (known as John in Britain) was born in San Sebastian, Spain, on 29 January 1920. He was highly commended when he presented his doctoral thesis in

Pharmacy at the Central University (of Madrid).

Reading a copy of *Camino (The Way)* on a train journey piqued an interest in meeting its author, St Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei. He first met St Josemaría in January 1940 and a few weeks later, on 15 March 1940, realising he had received a calling from God, asked for admission as a numerary member.

In the years that followed, Juan Antonio was appointed Director of halls of residence in Madrid and Granada.

On 28 December 1946 with two other members of Opus Dei, he arrived in London to begin the apostolic work of Opus Dei in Britain. Thanks to a scholarship from the Spanish Ministry of External Affairs, he continued his research work under Professor Raistrick at the *London*

*School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*, in Gower Street. He was a member of the Biochemical Society.

After his ordination to the priesthood in 1953, Fr John returned to England. He was head of Opus Dei in Britain for a good number of years. Fr John made many friends with his open and warm heart and his infectious laughter.

In 1972 he returned to Spain, where he was Rector of the Church of St Joseph in Seville. He died in that city on 25 April 2005.

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