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Holiness, the “secret force that transforms the world”

Cardinal Nichols thanks Opus Dei for its work in Britain – and Vatican Archbishop presents an Opus Dei Blessed as a model of holiness in everyday life

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The most effective leadership in faith always begins by personal example" a leading Vatican bishop told a

packed congregation in Westminster Cathedral yesterday (May 12th).

Preaching at the first ever Mass for the feast of Blessed Alvaro del Portillo, who was beatified last September, Archbishop Arthur Roche told his listeners that God's extraordinary power, manifested through the silent processes of nature, most reveals itself in the hidden work of sanctifying human souls. He described sanctity as the "secret force that transforms the world".

The Archbishop, who has been secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments since 2012, presented Blessed Alvaro as an example of someone who sought sanctity in an inconspicuous and humble manner in everyday life, and encouraged his listeners, mainly married people, to do the same. He described "the

simplicity of family life" as "the chosen place where people learn to fall in love with Christ day by day".

Blessed Alvaro was for many years the closest collaborator of St Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei. When Escrivá died in 1975, he succeeded him as head of the Prelature until his own death in 1994. He stood out for his humility, fidelity and love for the Church and played a discreet but significant role in the Second Vatican Council. His feast is now celebrated annually on May 12th.

"The one thing I have readily noticed in the members of Opus Dei," said the Archbishop, "and I say this, as an outsider, is the natural way in which you relate everything to God and his providence, not least in difficult and trying times." He recommended this as "a well applied spirituality accessible to everyone."

The Mass' principal celebrant was Cardinal Vincent Nichols who in brief but profoundly moving words of welcome thanked Opus Dei members for their discreet and under-stated service of the Church not only in his archdiocese but throughout Britain.

For more pictures of the event, see: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/catholicism/sets/72157652333271438/>

For Archbishop Roche's full homily, see: <https://opusdei.org/en-uk/article/homily-of-archbishop-arthur-roche-at-westminster-cathedral-on-12-may-2015-for-the-mass-of-blessed-alvaro-del-portillo/>