

# Letter from the Prelate (1 October 2018)

Letter from the Prelate for the 90th anniversary of the foundation of Opus Dei.

01/10/2018

Rome, 1 October 2018

My dearest children: May Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

It is 90 years tomorrow since 2nd October 1928. “On that day the Lord

founded his Work, he raised up Opus Dei" (*Intimate Notes*, no. 306), wrote St Josemaría afterwards. The joy with which we celebrate this anniversary is at the same time an act of thanksgiving to God, who continually enriches his Church with gifts and charisms. "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!" (Ps 118:1). Before our Father an immense panorama opened up: to cooperate in reconciling the whole world with God, through professional work and the other circumstances of daily life.

Let's think about God's primacy. It is he who "founded his Work", and it is he who continues to take it forward. As in the whole Church, the Gospel words are fulfilled: "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of

itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head" (*Mk 4:26-28*). St Josemaría did his part: intense prayer, determined interior struggle, and untiring apostolic drive. However, he was always convinced that all the strength that impelled him to serve souls came from God: "Lord, I thank you for having made me understand without the shadow of a doubt that everything is yours: the blossoms, the fruit, the tree, the leaves, and the clear water which springs up to eternal life. *Gratias tibi, Deus!* (*In Dialogue with the Lord*, p. 136). The primacy of God's grace is equally real in all Christian life, in the life of every single one of us.

As well as considering God's gift, let's renew our gratitude that he has chosen us to work together with him (cf. *2 Cor 6:1*), in spite of our smallness. Sometimes it may seem to us that in reality our role in God's

plans is irrelevant; however, he takes our freedom seriously, and really does count on us. Let's think about the boy who placed the little he had – five loaves and two fish – in Jesus' hands: starting from that generous gesture, Christ fed a multitude (cf. *Jn 6:1-13*). God also counts on our daily response, made up of little things that become great through the strength of his grace. And so we dedicate our best efforts to seeking him in our work, and to serving the people around us, trying to see them and love them as he does, and to bring to the world in a thousand different ways the light and warmth that he has placed in our hearts. All that is our small cooperation as his children, which our Father God uses to work marvels in souls.

The Synod on young people, faith and vocational discernment will begin soon. Let's keep praying, asking for lights and energy so that

Jesus' message continues to reach many young people, and they decide to follow him generously along the various paths that there are in the Church. The closeness of this ecclesial event to the Work's anniversary can help us to see our own personal vocation with renewed enthusiasm, that of a heart that is young and in love. Our Founder never lost that youthfulness of soul. He endured many setbacks and sufferings, yet always kept young because of his love for Our Lord. This is how he explained the secret of his vitality to us: "When I pray at the foot of the altar 'to God who gives joy to my youth' (Ps 42:4), I feel young and I know that I will never consider myself old. If I keep true to my God, Love will constantly vivify me. My youth will be renewed like that of the eagle (cf. Ps 102:5)" (*Friends of God*, no. 31). If we stay united to Our Lord we will always be young, and he will continue doing the Work, always

ancient and always new, in the different places, cultures and times.

For a human life, ninety years is a long time; but for the Work it is certainly very short. We are still in the beginnings: that can serve to remind us of the gift we have received and of the beautiful mission that Christ has placed in our hands.

Don't stop accompanying me with your prayer and, above all, let's accompany the Holy Father during these days, so as to go all together to Jesus through Mary.

A very affectionate blessing from your Father