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Prelate's Homily at First Mass in Prelatic Church

On January 27, Monsignor Fernando Ocariz, Prelate of Opus Dei, made a solemn entrance in the prelatic church of Our Lady of Peace. Here is a translation of his homily at the Mass.

01/27/2017

Benedictus Dominus qui dedit requiem populo suo (1 Kgs 8:56). “Blessed be God, who has given peace to his

people.” These words that we have just heard in the first reading refer to the people of Israel. We can make use of them now to give thanks to God for the peace that is, for us, the unity of the Work. The unity of the Work that He grants us and that we thank Him for; a unity that is the font of true peace.

At the same time we realize, and we should frequently reflect on it, that this peace is Jesus Himself. As Saint Paul writes, *Ipsa enim est pax nostra* (Eph 2:14). He is our peace. Unity depends fundamentally on God’s grace, which will never be lacking to us, but also on ourselves, on how closely united we are to Christ. He is our peace. He is the source of our unity in the Holy Spirit.

In the second reading, we have heard some words that Saint Josemaria so often meditated on and advised us to do likewise: *elegit nos in Ipso ante*

mundi constitutionem ut essemus sancti (Eph 1:4). Elegit nos in Ipso: in Christ. Once again, we see the need to be identified with our Lord, as daughters and sons of God the Father. This is the foundation of our spirit: realizing, truly realizing that we are daughters and sons of God, which brings peace to our soul and helps us to be, in every circumstance, sowers of peace and joy.

It's only natural that today we reflect on who the Father is in the Work. Among the conditions Saint Josemaria highlighted for the Father, both in our Statutes as well as here, engraved on the chair of this church, is prudence: the prudence that I beseech you to pray to God for me. Prudence is the virtue needed for governing. And prudence also for each and every one of us, because what is good for the Father is good for everyone. The prudence to be, in each moment, very faithful to the

spirit of the Work, faced with changing circumstances of time and place. May the Father always have the prudence needed to be faithful, very faithful, to our Father's spirit, which is the spirit God has wanted for us.

Another characteristic the Father has to have is piety, a deep piety. You will recall that Saint Josemaria assured us that piety is "the remedy of remedies." So ask that the Father may be pious, that all of you may be pious, and that with your piety you may sustain the piety of the Father, so that all of us may be closely united to our Lord in a unity of thoughts, hearts, intentions.

Another characteristic is love for the Church and the Pope. How often the Father, Don Javier, insisted (as did Blessed Alvaro and Saint Josemaria) that we pray very much for the Church and the Pope. So ask our

Lord that the Father, now and always, may make this motto of our Founder a reality: *Omnes cum Petro ad Iesum per Mariam!* May all of us truly go in close union with the Pope, who is now Francis, to Jesus, through Mary.

Each of these characteristics needs to be considered in more depth, and several homilies would be need for each one.... Another characteristic that Saint Josemaria indicated is the Father's love for Opus Dei and for all his daughters and sons. Therefore I ask you to pray for me, also so that those words of Scripture may be a reality in my life: *Dilatatum est cor meum* (2 Cor 6:11), may my heart be enlarged. And this holds for all of us. The Father, Don Javier, so often told us: "may you love one another, may you truly love one another!" True fraternity is what enables all of us to be united: a fraternity that stems from Christ's heart.

Back in 1933 (you will have read about this in one of the biographies or somewhere else), our Father addressed our Lord with a prayer that we now make our own: “Lord! Make me so much yours that not even the holiest affections enter my heart without passing through your wounded Heart!” And it’s so. To truly love everyone, and first of all those who make up this marvelous family of ours that God has given us, we have to pass through Christ’s Heart.

Let us briefly consider now today’s Gospel, the Visitation. Each day in the Rosary we contemplate this marvelous scene of our Lady’s very generous self-giving. May Mary help us to be like this, generous in service. And also ask that the Father may be such: a servant of everyone, because authority is for serving, and otherwise it is useless. May it always be for serving.

Magnificat anima mea, Dominum, our Lady prayed in the *magnificat*. We praise God with these words of our Lady. And recalling what Benedict XVI once said, we can understand the *magnificat* as “letting God be great in our souls” (Benedict XVI, Homily, 15 August 2005). May we give God all the space in our heart, and thus we will also have a great apostolic drive, a hunger for souls that constantly spurs us to seek their good out of love for Jesus Christ.

Let us beseech our Lady, Mother of the Church, Queen of Opus Dei: we entrust to your motherly mediation the entire Work, so that this new page of our history may always have your help, and always continue being the history of God’s mercies. Amen.

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