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# **Prelate's Trip to Russia**

In Moscow's Cathedral, Bishop Javier Echevarría and the Archbishop of Moscow, Paul Pezzi, celebrated a Thanksgiving Mass for the beatification of Alvaro del Portillo.

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## **Mass in the Cathedral**

Archbishop Paul Pezzi, of Moscow, and Bishop Javier Echevarría, Prelate of Opus Dei, celebrated a Mass of

Thanksgiving on November 4 in the Cathedral of Moscow for the recent beatification of Alvaro del Portillo.

Attending the Mass were many faithful who take part in the means of formation offered by Opus Dei. The Archbishop of Moscow also blessed an icon with an image of Blessed Alvaro. At the end of the Mass, the faithful had the opportunity to venerate a relic of the first successor of Saint Josemaria.

At the beginning of the Mass, the Archbishop thanked Bishop Javier Echevarría for his visit to Moscow and also expressed his thanks for the efforts of the faithful of the Prelature in his diocese. "The apostolic work that the people of Opus Dei are carrying out in Moscow and Saint Petersburg," the Archbishop said, "is quite beautiful and constructive for the diocese."

**Get-together in Moscow**

The Prelate of Opus Dei met in Moscow with people taking part in the means of formation offered by the Prelature. He began by saying that "our Christian life should be joyful; it should be an offering of love to those who are suffering."

Making reference to the parable of the guests invited to the wedding feast, the Gospel passage read in the Mass that day, he said: "Jesus invites us to share in his friendship and communion. The Gospel message is not something old and out of date: it is ever new, since Christ is alive and will accompany us right to the end of the world. Since setting foot in Moscow, I have not stopped asking him to bless the streets of this city with his graces."

A mother of four children asked him how she could explain to her family "the value of the Eucharist, why it was worthwhile dedicating a half an

hour to Mass and two hours of traffic with a small child."

"The Eucharist," replied Bishop Echevarría, "is food for the soul. Without Jesus, we can't live a full life. Just as a mother gives food to her children, so God nourishes us with his love. It's true that at times attending Mass requires traveling a long distance. But do those who are in love find an obstacle in the distance that separates them? The Mass will help you to love your husband and children even more."

Another person asked: "What is it like being the successor to two saints?" "I have been a witness to how St. Josemaria and Blessed Alvaro lived for the others, from morning to night. I, like everyone else, also have to struggle each day to overcome my defects. Therefore I ask that you pray for me."

Finally, he invited everyone to pray for Russia, "since, as St. Josemaria reminded us, the only effective and true weapon is prayer."

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