

# Noteworthy statements on Bishop del Portillo

02/28/2004

**John Paul II:** "Good and faithful servant"

"Upon receiving the sad news of the loss of Bishop Alvaro del Portillo, Prelate of Opus Dei, I express to you and to the members of the Prelature my deeply felt sympathy. I recall with gratitude to our Lord the life of the departed, his priestly and episcopal zeal, the example of fortitude and of

confidence in divine Providence which he constantly offered, his fidelity to the See of Peter and his generous ecclesial service as an intimate collaborator and worthy successor to Blessed [now St.] Josemaría. I raise up to our Lord fervent suffrages to take this good and faithful servant into eternal joy. And to all who have benefited from his pastoral dedication and outstanding gifts of mind and heart I send as consolation a special apostolic blessing."

*(Telegram of sympathy sent to Bishop Javier Echevarría)* **Cardinal Carlo Caffarra, Archbishop of Bologna:**  
"Disciple of Christ"

"When we met, he had the custom of kneeling before me to receive a blessing. The first time it happened I was deeply impressed, because it immediately made me recall the time shortly after my ordination as a

priest when a bishop asked me to bless him. The bishop was the one who one month before had ordained me, and he was asking for my blessing before he died, because he was suffering from an incurable tumor. This is the humility of the Christ's disciples.

*(Servo buono e fedele, a cura di  
Vicente Bosch, Libreria Editrice  
Vaticana)*

**Bishop Javier Echevarria, Prelate  
of Opus Dei:** "He wanted no honors  
or recognition for himself"

"I met Bishop Alvaro del Portillo near the end of the 1940s, and I have been very near him from the time I moved to Rome in 1950. This continuing closeness -- more than 40 years -- has permitted me to experience deeply his great intelligence, his broad culture, his capacity for work, serenity of spirit and, what is most important, the depth of his faith and

the intimacy and richness of his relationship to God. I consider it above all a duty of justice to bear witness to the fact that Bishop del Portillo wanted no honors or recognition for himself. He did not even seek personal achievements or occasions in which he would be able to stand out. He had one single ambition: to be a son of God and a faithful servant of the Church, according to the spirit received from St. Josemaría and according to his example."

*(In memoriam, "Render amabile la Verità")*

**Joaquin Navarro-Valls, Director of the Vatican Press Office:** "He had good sense of humor and an optimistic character"

"He was a person with two outstanding features: a good sense of humor and a very optimistic and positive character. He was a most

faithful successor to the founder of Opus Dei. He left behind him an indelible imprint, characteristic of men of God who have silently fulfilled a mission for the benefit of others."

*(Mundo Cristiano, April 1994, "On the Death of Bishop Alvaro del Portillo")*

**Vittorio Messori, Italian journalist and writer:** "He was truly a father"

"What at first impressed me about him was his deep piety, united to an authentic lay spirit. He had the *look* and the mentality of a man of the world. He was truly a father, as they called him in Opus Dei. He gave you the desire of going to confession with him, more than asking him questions".

*(Romana, 1994, no. 18)*

**Natalia López Moratalla, Professor of Biochemistry, University of**

**Navarre:** "Loyal to God and the Church"

"To recall Don Alvaro is to listen to the echo of a word: fidelity. Yes, he was a faithful man, good and faithful, loyal to God and to the Church, faithful when he gave his word, faithful to us who have received the benefit of his pastoral and paternal zeal. God willed that such loyalty should flow in a broad channel--opened by the Founder of Opus Dei--of work rooted in the yearning for sanctity."

*(Servo buono e fedele, a cura di  
Vicente Bosch, Libreria Editrice  
Vaticana)*