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# A faithful son of St Josemaria

The first vocation of Opus Dei in Ireland died in Nairobi after many years of faithfulness and work in Kenya.

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Fr Cormac had been sick for the last few months. He had contracted Covid a few months ago but he managed to recover somewhat but at his 94 years of age was not able to regain his strength sufficiently and passed away quietly on 22 November 2021 around 9.05 pm. He lived and died in

a centre of Opus Dei located in the compound of Strathmore School in Nairobi, Kenya.

Fr Cormac was born on 21st March 1927 in Sligo, Ireland. His father, Patrick, was a doctor and his mother, Nora, was a teacher. He had two brothers and two sisters. He studied Arts in University College Dublin, where he met Jose Ramon Madurga, a young Spanish engineer working in Dublin. On 9th January 1948 he joined Opus Dei as a numerary. He was the first vocation from that country. Through him his sisters also joined the Work, so in some way we can say that he was also responsible for starting the apostolate of Opus Dei with women in that country.

He was ordained in 1955 and after that he spent time helping the apostolate of Opus Dei in different countries. In a letter from the Prelate of Opus Dei sent when receiving the

news about his death, he summarized Fr. Cormac's life as follows: *Cormac has been faithful to the end. He has done much good with his dedication and apostolic vibration: first in Ireland, where he planted the seed of the Work; then in various countries of Europe and North America with his pastoral and teaching work, and during his years in Rome working with great prestige. Finally in the last years in your region, where he exercised his priestly ministry joyfully, with deep piety and serving countless people, trying to bring them closer to Jesus Christ.*

Fr Cormac was also a renowned author. Some of his books, still available on the internet, include *Covenanted Happiness, Man and Values, The Theology of Marriage, The Mass explained, Authority and Freedom in the Church*. He also had a website where he made available many of his judgments when he was

working as a judge in the Roman rota. In the Light of the Law: Msgr. Cormac Burke's canon law website.

An article by Chris Noonan in *Studia et Documenta* Vol. 13 provides extensive information about Cormac's efforts as a young student in helping to begin the apostolic work of Opus Dei in Ireland, and the key role he played in the first translation of *The Way* into English.

Despite all his learning he chose to spend the last few years of his life working happily as an assistant chaplain in Strathmore School. He was very happy talking with young people and helping for the future generation of leaders.

May he rest in eternal peace!

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