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## **Opus Dei and allegations of wealth and power**

"The Da Vinci Code" falsely portrays Opus Dei as being focused on wealth and power. The reality is that Opus Dei is focused on helping people grow in their faith and integrate it with their ordinary activities, not on gaining power to implement some political agenda. Similarly Opus Dei and its members have great concern for the poor, which is an important element of the Christian faith.

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**Brian Kolodiejchuk, M.C.,**

Postulator of the cause of canonization of **Mother Teresa**: “The poor, the sick, the abandoned were the weapons he [St. Josemaría Escrivá] used to win the battle of getting Opus Dei underway. In both cases, in that of the founder of Opus Dei and in that of Mother Teresa, the root of this commitment is found in faith, which made them see Christ in every person.” From a statement given on February 27, 2002.

**Cardinal Luciani** (one month before his election as **Pope John Paul I**):

“Newspapers give [Opus Dei] a lot of coverage, but their reports are frequently quite inaccurate. The extension, number and quality of the members of Opus Dei may have led some people to imagine that a quest

for power or some iron discipline binds the member together. Actually the opposite is the case: all there is is the desire for holiness and encouragement for others to become holy, but cheerfully, with a spirit of service and a great sense of freedom.” *Il Gazzettino* (Italy), July 25, 1978.

**Cardinal John O’Connor:** “I believe it critical to dispel the notion, a notion with which you are familiar, which borders on calumny, that Opus Dei is concerned only about the wealthy and the well educated.... I wish the myth about Opus Dei could be expelled forever. I want it to be clear to all of you that I consider the Archdiocese of New York to be privileged by your presence.” From a homily given at St. Patrick's Cathedral, June 26, 1998. Cardinal O’Connor was Archbishop of New York.

**St. Josemaría Escrivá:** “Opus Dei has no power, and wants no power, over any temporal activity. All it wants is to spread a Gospel message, to all men who live in the world, that God wants them to love Him and serve Him by, with and through their secular activities. It follows that the members of Opus Dei, who are ordinary Christians, work wherever and however they like. The only thing the Work does is to help them spiritually, so that they can always act with a Christian conscience.”

From an interview published in the Italian weekly, *Osservatore della Domenica*, May 26, 1968, and republished in *Conversations with Josemaría Escrivá*, Scepter Publishers, 2002.

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