

opusdei.org

# **Biographical Timeline of St. Josemaria Escriva**

This biographical timeline covers basic dates and occurrences in St. Josemaria's life. At various points there are links to more detailed information found on the St. Josemaria Website.

05/03/2011

**Significant dates in the life of St.  
Josemaria Escriva**

1902 Born (Jan. 9) in Barbastro. Son of José Escrivá and Dolores Albas y Blanc.

1904 Inexplicably cured of grave illness after doctors had given up hope. Fulfilling a promise to the Blessed Virgin Mary, his parents take him to the nearby Shrine of Our Lady of Torreciudad in thanksgiving.

1910 His sister Rosario dies at nine months of age.

1912 His sister Lolita dies at age 5. Receives his First Holy Communion.

1913 His sister Chon (Asuncion) dies at age 8.

Expanded biography: A Christian Family

1915 His father's business fails and the family moves to Logroño, where his father works in a clothing store.

1917 During Christmastime, sees the footprints of a discalced Carmelite in the snow. Begins to think that God is asking something of him, but does not know what it is.

1919 Begins taking classes for the priesthood at the seminary in Logroño to prepare for what God will ask him to do. His brother Santiago is born.

*Expanded biography: Footprints in the Snow*

1920 Moves to Saragossa to enter the Seminary of San Carlos.

1922 Appointed Student Director (Prefect) when he is only twenty years old. Receives the tonsure and Minor Orders.

1923 Begins studies of Civil Law at the University of Saragossa, while continuing his seminary studies.

1924 His father dies in Logrono. Becomes responsible for supporting his family (mother, sister and brother). Ordained subdeacon and deacon.

1925 Ordained a priest.

*Expanded biography: The Seminary Years*

1927 After completing his Licentiate degree in Civil Law, moves to Madrid to pursue doctoral studies. Works as chaplain to the Foundation for the Sick of the Apostolic Ladies of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

*Expanded biography: Among the Poor and Sick*

1928 On October 2, “sees” Opus Dei, while on a spiritual retreat in Madrid. Begins looking for those who will can join him in his new work.

## Expanded biography: The Founding of Opus Dei

1930 While celebrating Mass, sees that women can also join Opus Dei.

1931 Appointed Chaplain to the St. Elizabeth Foundation and ceases being chaplain for the Foundation of the Sick.

1931 - 1936 The Second Republic in Spain. Growing anti-clericalism with periodic outbursts of anticlerical violence. First members join Opus Dei.

1933 Begins an activity for the spiritual formation of university students. Opens the DYA Academy (Derecho y Arquitectura), Opus Dei's first apostolic work.

1934 DYA Academy is converted to a university student residence.

## Expanded biography: The First Years

1936 (July) - 1939 (April) The Spanish Civil War.

1936 At the outbreak of the civil war in July, abandons the student residence, stops dressing as a priest, and goes into hiding at various houses. In October, takes refuge in a psychiatric clinic, the Casa de Reposo y Salud, directed by his friend Dr. Suils.

*Video: Josemaria Escriva in the Spanish Civil War*

1937 **March:** the clinic becomes too dangerous and he takes refuge at the Honduran Legation with a few other members of Opus Dei. **October:** leaves Madrid for Barcelona.

**November:** crosses the Pyrenees into Andorra on foot with members of Opus Dei and others. **December:** reenters Spain in the Nationalist zone and arrives in San Sebastian.

*Expanded biography: The Civil War*

1938 Settles in Burgos and restarts his pastoral work, visiting members of Opus Dei and friends who are at the fronts. Preaches several retreats. Works on his doctoral thesis in law and on his book, *The Way*.

1939 Returns to Madrid and opens a new the student residence. Begins activities of Opus Dei in Valencia, Barcelona, Valladolid, Saragossa, Bilbao, Sevilla, and Santiago. Receives his doctoral degree in Law at the University of Madrid. Publishes *Holy Rosary* and *The Way*.

1940 Preaches numerous spiritual retreats to priests and religious.

1941 The Bishop of Madrid approves Opus Dei as Pious Union. His mother dies in Madrid.

1943 Founds the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross which allows for the ordination of priests in Opus Dei. Opus Dei receives the *nihil obstat* of

the Holy See (October) and is erected in the diocese of Madrid (December).

*Expanded biography: Beginning Again*

1944 First three priests of Opus Dei are ordained. Diagnosed with mellitus diabetes.

*Expanded biography: Helping*

*Priests* 1946 Arrives in Rome. Opus Dei begins stable work in Portugal, Italy and Great Britain. The Holy See issues a document in praise of the aims of Opus Dei.

*Expanded biography: Traveling to Rome*

1947 Opus Dei receives provisional approval from Pope Pius XII. Opus Dei begins stable work in France and Ireland.

1949 Makes his first trip through Central Europe. Opus Dei begins



apostolic work in Mexico and United States.

1950 Pius XII grants the final approval to Opus Dei. Opus Dei begins apostolic work in Chile and Argentina.

1951 - 1953 Opus Dei begins apostolic work in Colombia, Venezuela, Germany, Guatemala, and Peru.

*Expanded biography: Expansion*

1954 Suddenly cured of the diabetes he had suffered for 10 years. Opus Dei begins apostolic work in Ecuador.

1955 Obtains the doctorate in Theology from the Lateran University of Rome.

1956 Appointed Consultor of the Congregation for Seminaries and Universities.

His sister Carmen dies in Rome. Opus Dei begins apostolic work in Uruguay and Switzerland.

1957 - 1960 Opus Dei begins stable work in Brazil, Austria, Canada, Japan, Kenya, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Holland.

Expanded biography: Of a hundred souls, we are interested in a hundred

1961 John XXIII appoints him Consultor to the Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law.

1962 - 1965 Second Vatican Council . Opus Dei begins stable work in Paraguay, Australia, Philippines, Belgium, and Nigeria.

Expanded biography: Vatican II

1967 Second Assembly of the Friends of the University of Navarre.

Preaches the “Campus homily”  
*Passionately loving the world.*

1968 *Conversations with Monsignor Escriva* is published; includes interviews with *Time*, *Le Figaro*, *New York Times*, *L'Osservatore della Domenica*, etc.

1970 Construction of the Shrine of Torreciudad begins. Travels to Mexico, where he preaches to thousands of people.

*Expanded biography: Difficult Times*

1972 Makes a two-month apostolic trip through Spain and Portugal, meeting numerous people and holding many large get-togethers which are filmed.

*Expanded biography: Catechetical Trips*

1973 Publishes *Christ Is Passing By*, a collection of 18 homilies.

1974 From May to August makes an apostolic trip through Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Venezuela.

*Expanded biography: I Seek Your Face*

1975 Returns to South America and visits Venezuela and Guatemala until illness forces him to return to Rome. Celebrates his priestly golden jubilee.

June 26, 1975 Dies in his office. Buried in the crypt of the present Prelatic Church of Our Lady of Peace, in the central headquarters of Opus Dei. In September Alvaro del Portillo is elected his successor. Opus Dei is established in 31 countries and has over 60,000 members, including over 1000 priests.

*Expanded biography: I Will Help You More*

1977 Publication of *Friends of God*, a second book of homilies.

1981 His cause of canonization is opened. Publication of *Via Crucis (Way of the Cross)*.

1986 Publication of *Furrow*. Final testimonies are taken and about 8,000 pages of documents are delivered to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

1987 Publication of *The Forge*.

1990 The Decree proclaiming his heroic virtues promulgated. He acquires the title “Venerable”.

1992 Beatified on May 17 by John Paul II in St Peter’s Square. His liturgical feastday, June 26, is set.

2002 Canonized on October 6 by John Paul II in St Peter’s Square.

*Video: Canonization Mass*

.....

pdf | document generated  
automatically from [https://opusdei.org/  
en/article/biographical-timeline-of-st-  
josemaria-escriva/](https://opusdei.org/en/article/biographical-timeline-of-st-josemaria-escriva/) (08/18/2025)