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New Volume in Complete Works of Saint Josemaria

A conversation with Luis Cano and Fr. Francesc Castells, co-authors of the Critical-Historical edition of "In Dialogue with the Lord," a book of previously unpublished texts from Saint Josemaria's oral preaching.

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In bookstores as of September 1st, *En diálogo con el Señor* (trans. *In Dialogue with the Lord*) is a book of

previously unpublished texts from the oral preaching of Opus Dei's founder. It is the result of research efforts carried out by the Istituto Storico San Josemaría Escrivá. The volume is the first in a series on the oral preaching of Saint Josemaria, as part of the collection of Complete Works that the institute began preparing in 2001. Luis Cano and Fr. Francesc Castells are the co-authors of the critical-historical edition of *In Dialogue with the Lord*. What follows are questions and answers regarding some aspects of the new book.

— Tell us about *In Dialogue with the Lord* and what makes it so special.

— Luis Cano (L.C.): The book offers 25 texts by Saint Josemaria Escriva that, up until now, have never been published. They include meditations and talks on the spiritual life, which he preached to members of Opus Dei between 1954 and 1975. It's his

prayer "out loud" you could say. The founder speaks with God about important topics in Christian spirituality, and gives advice about staying on the path to holiness in ordinary life. He also shares details about his life and the history of Opus Dei, which have a lot of biographical value as well.

— Why is this material only being published now?

— Fr. Francesc Castells (F.C.): Since 2001, the Historical Institute has been working on the publication of the Complete Works of Saint Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer. Up until now, the work was focused on the books published during the founder's lifetime. Five critical-historical volumes were published and others are currently being printed or are otherwise far along in the process. In addition to this line of research, which is just about

finished, we are now presenting the results of a long process of examining the unpublished works, of which *In Dialogue with the Lord* is the first volume. It focuses on the oral preaching of Saint Josemaria, one of five categories that the Complete Works Collection hopes to include.

— Does that mean there are other unpublished texts in line for publication?

— L.C.: We are working on the publication of a variety of unpublished texts, such as the *Instructions* and *Letters*, texts that Saint Josemaria wrote for the formation of the men and women in Opus Dei, in order to help them know the spirit and history of their institution. As for his oral preaching, we have a large collection of transcripts of meditations, homilies, and get-togethers in the Prelature's

General Archives, whose ongoing study and classification has been in process for years now and still needs time. The same can be said of other materials we have, such as a wide variety of manuscripts and letters written by the founder, extracts of which have already been published in the Institute's journal *Studia et Documenta*.

— You talk about "texts from his oral preaching." What does this mean exactly?

— F.C.: The texts included in *In Dialogue with the Lord* come from different places: meditations, a homily, a variety of get-togethers or talks that were more informal. In general, when we say "texts from his oral preaching," we mean adapting and setting down in written form what was originally spoken out loud, communicated verbally using expressions typical of that time

period. In the case of this book, these are transcriptions that were actually revised by Saint Josemaria himself, who made the kind of editing changes that are always needed when an oral discourse becomes a written text.

— So we have 25 texts from varying dates and circumstances. What criteria did you follow when making the selection?

— L.C: Almost all of these texts had already been gathered into a volume. Initially, as part of the founder's cause of canonization in 1986, and later on, in 1995, they were printed for the use of the men and women of Opus Dei, with the same title as now, *In Dialogue with the Lord*. All of these texts were revised and corrected by Saint Josemaria between 1967 and 1975.

— What sources or documents did you rely on to prepare this critical-historical edition?

— F.C.: First of all, we have the printed pages of two publications for the Prelature's faithful, *Crónica* and *Noticias*, where these texts were originally published. Our first job was to collate these sources. We also looked at and listened to the original transcriptions and recordings that have been preserved, along with other documents in the archive that, more than additional sources, serve as complementary material that helped us resolve doubts or fill in the missing links and clarify the context of certain passages. We explain all of this to the reader in the footnotes and additional commentary.

***En diálogo con el Señor* (trans. *In Dialogue with the Lord*) is currently being prepared for**

publication in English by Scepter (U.K.) and will be available soon.

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