

The Prelate in Arequipa: "Unity between yourselves is the root of everything else"

On Thursday 1 August, Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz traveled to Arequipa, where he met with families from the city. On Friday, back in Lima, he will meet with young people and families from the Peruvian capital.

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The Prelate of Opus Dei in Peru

From 30 July to 8 August, Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz will spend time in Arequipa, Piura, and Lima. At the same time of year, 50 years ago, St. Josemaría traveled to Peru to be with members and friends of Opus Dei there in 1974.

- 30 July: Arrival in Lima
 - 1 August: Gathering with families in Arequipa
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Thursday 1 August

Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz entered Arequipa under a clear sky and bright sunshine. The city is colloquially known as the “White City” because of the volcanic stone used in many constructions.

Upon arriving in Arequipa, the Prelate headed to the episcopal see to greet the city's archbishop, Bishop Javier del Río Alba. The day before, he had met the Archbishop of Lima, Bishop Carlos Castillo, and then went to the cathedral to pray to Our Lady of Evangelization, before whose image St. Josemaría also prayed in 1974.

At noon, the first meeting with families and young people began at the Convention Center of the Bar Association Club. Among the audience were people from Tacna, a city on the Chilean border, and Cusco, 500 km away through the Andes Mountains. The backdrop of the stage featured a panoramic view of Arequipa, highlighting its 17th century cathedral and the Misti volcano. To the right, an image of Our Lady of Chapi, the city's patroness, oversaw the event.

After praying the Angelus with everyone, the Prelate reminded them that the Lord “has called all of us to be saints” and that holiness does not consist in having no flaws: holiness “is not the perfection of a museum, but the perfection of love.”

In response to a question from a supernumerary who introduced herself as “the eldest in Arequipa,” the Prelate replied, “the eldest, but not old, because the youth we carry within us is what counts; love is what gives us youth.”

Javier asked the Father how to help other married couples in their Christian life. “Unity between yourselves is the root of everything else,” the Prelate told him. “As the years go by, try to seek one another’s good.”

At the end, Msgr. Ocáriz encouraged everyone to live joyfully with their families and friends, in spite of any

difficulties that may arise: “Always joyful, because we are children of God.”

In the late afternoon, the Prelate traveled back to Lima, where he will meet with couples and young people on Friday.

Tuesday 30 July

The Prelate landed in the Lima airport on the night of Tuesday 30 July, having flown from Santiago de Chile. Johan and Cinthya, along with their five children, welcomed him and gave him some gifts and letters.

On Thursday 1 August, he will travel to Arequipa, where he will meet with numerous families.

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