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St. Josemaría Institute launched with new video

The St. Josemaría Institute, a foundation to promote the life and teaching of Opus Dei's founder, Saint Josemaria Escriva, was officially inaugurated in Manhattan on April 19.

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The inaugural event featured the premiere of a new film, *Passionately Loving the World: Ordinary*

Americans Living the Spirituality of St. Josemaría. The 28-minute film features interviews with people from across the United States who have found inspiration in St. Josemaría Escrivá's spirituality. Subjects include a fire-fighter in Los Angeles, a salesperson in Houston, a farmer in Illinois, and an entrepreneur in New Jersey. The program was written, directed and produced by The Cresta Group of Chicago.

Copies of the documentary can be obtained online on the institute's Website, www.stjosemaria.org. People ordering the video are invited to make a voluntary contribution to help defray the costs of the DVD. Requests for the documentary have already been received from around the world, including Trinidad and Tobago, Kuwait, India, Australia, Canada, South America and Europe. Excerpts of the program have been shown on CNN and ABC News.

There were 300 guests in attendance at the premiere of the video, which was held at the Lighthouse Auditorium of Manhattan, the theater used for the Oscar Academy Award screenings in New York City.

“Saint Josemaría shows us that holiness is happiness and happiness is holiness,” said Rev. James Socias, president of the new institute. “We want to help as many people as possible discover Saint Josemaría’s message about how to make everyday life a joyful encounter with God.”

Besides videos, the institute offers a variety of resources to those wishing to learn more about St. Josemaría Escrivá, as well as conducting seminars and other activities. The institute has a toll-free number, 1-877-stjosemaria.

Msgr. Thomas G. Bohlin, vicar for Opus Dei in the United States, said

that plans for the institute had been underway since the 2002 canonization of Saint Josemaría, who founded Opus Dei in 1928. Msgr. Bohlin expressed hope that the institute would spread Escrivá's message to people not involved in Opus Dei. "When a person is canonized, he or she is no longer a private commodity but belongs to the patrimony of the universal Church." He added, "There was an advertising slogan a few years ago – 'Orange juice, it's not just for breakfast any more.' Well, I think we can now say: Saint Josemaría, he's not just for Opus Dei any more."

Also speaking at the inauguration was Professor John F. Coverdale, who worked in Rome with Josemaría Escrivá from 1960 to 1968 and is the Director of Academics of the Institute. Saint Josemaría, said Coverdale, "tells us that holiness is not something for a privileged few

with extraordinary gifts, like Mother Teresa or John Paul II. Nor is it reserved for those who live a quiet life far removed from the hustle and bustle of the workaday world. God, Saint Josemaría reminds us, wants the subway conductor, the trial lawyer, and the kindergarten teacher to be just as holy as the cloistered nun. And he wants them to be holy, to love him and to love others, not despite their work and family and social obligations, but precisely in and through them.”

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