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Homily of Bishop Cinense on the feast of Blessed Alvaro

Bishop Cinense spoke about how Blessed Alvaro was a firm support (Saxum) for St. Josemaria in carrying out Opus Dei; and how we can be a firm support to people in need, by praying for them the Memorare (Saxum Prayer) to our Lady.

05/13/2015

Reverend Monsignors; Reverend Fathers (both the religious and

secular); my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, especially those who are with the Opus Dei:

As I look at you this evening, I feel like I am again in Madrid. So many people – *un mar de gente* - and I saw this unforgettable sight that made me, I think, during those moments, very ambitious, and I said, “I also want to become a saint.” Then my inner self said: “Aha! You are getting too ambitious.” Then I said: “No. The ambition to become a saint is very noble.” That should be for all of us. That should be our ambition in life. And so, brothers and sisters, we have come together to honor a *Blessed* and soon to be a *Saint*.

I would want to start with the pilgrimage of Blessed Don Alvaro. We remember the emotional and historical pilgrimage of Don Alvaro in the Holy Land in March 1994. How he was able to visit and retrace the

footsteps of the Lord; and how in the last day of the pilgrimage, he was able to celebrate the Holy Mass in the Cenacle, in the Upper Room, where the Holy Eucharist and the Priesthood were both established by the Lord.

We of course remember his travel back from the Holy Land to Rome, the Eternal City... Don Alvaro, had always worked *sub umbra Petri*, under the shadow of Peter. And we remember more - with joy and sorrow - that early morning of March 23, 1994. Don Alvaro would make his greatest pilgrimage from the Holy Land to the Eternal City; from the Eternal City to Eternal Life. If in the lifetime of our Father, St. Josemaria, Don Alvaro worked silently and tirelessly in the shadow of St. Josemaria, in his own lifetime, Don Alvaro worked untiringly *ad Iesum per Mariam cum Petro*, to Jesus thru Mary with Peter.

His life, my dear brothers and sisters, his life and his death speak so much of his Episcopal motto: *Regnare Christum Volumus* (We want Christ to reign). Don Alvaro was among the first priests of the prelature, and he is in fact is one of its first members.

Don Alvaro, his life and his collaboration, his presence, was such a source of strength to St. Josemaria that he nicknamed Don Alvaro his "Saxum." *Saxum*, his rock! If Christ has *Petrus* to continue on the Lord's salvific work; St. Josemaria has his *Saxum*, his rock, Don Alvaro, who would continue on his spiritual legacy in Opus Dei. And as if with complete foresight and vision, Don Alvaro would indeed carry on the work begun by St. Josemaria, and would eventually see its creation as a Personal Prelature and would be its first Bishop and Prelate.

In thanksgiving, let me quote to you from the book of John Coverdale, "Saxum"; the title of the book is "Saxum." He writes: "In thanksgiving for John Paul II's decision to make Opus Dei a personal prelature, he went on a pilgrimage to the shrine Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, and there made a novena to the Blessed Virgin, spending hours each day praying before her image. At the end of the novena he commented: "Her face shows an utter simplicity. Her expression is one of sweetness, of humility, of purity, of honesty. It's a look of compassion, of love, and at the same time, of suffering. I think that she suffered when she saw that no one was paying any attention to poor Juan Diego, and that she is looking at him with compassion and affection. I thought of your sins and mine, and I realized that she is looking at us, with that great affection - because she is also our mother - but also, at times, with

sorrow... Let us not cause our Mother in heaven any sorrow."

Again John Coverdale continues:
"Love for the Blessed Virgin was not simply one more devotion; but a dimension of his life. He imitated her faith (the faith of our Mother), her humility, her spirit of service, and her habit of keeping in her heart everything Jesus did and said."

In the Work, we have learned how it is to be in communion with God, with all the Saints in Heaven, and with all our brethren here on earth; but especially with those who find themselves in particular spiritual need. We strengthen them. We have learned to offer the *Memorare* for them; that our prayer and recourse to Our Lady would be their strength, their own *Saxum* in their hour of need.

My dear brothers and sisters, haven't we felt it ourselves? That just when

we needed it most, it's as if someone is giving us strength; someone is giving us that impressive aid when we cannot breathe well; someone giving us courage to hold on when we find it hard to hope; someone inspiring us when we cannot pray and judge well. That someone is Our Lady, interceding for us, for someone has asked her to do so. Someone has prayed the *Memorare* for us.

Hence in closing, I wish to ask you to pray with me the *Memorare*. Let us together ask Our Lady's maternal intercession for someone who is in dire need; someone in great difficulty; someone in great pain and sorrow; for someone who needs our prayer. And so, in the silence of our hearts, let us now pray to our Mother to give the solace and consolation to these people who have found themselves in such situations.

Let us now pray: "Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee I come, before thee I stand sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy, hear and answer me."

Amen.

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