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Prelate of Opus Dei ordains 38 new deacons

Bishop Javier Echevarría recently ordained as deacons 38 members of Opus Dei from 18 countries. The ceremony was celebrated at the Basilica of San Eugenio in Rome on the feast of Christ the King. Some excerpts from his homily follow.

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If we want to be true disciples of our Lord, we have to be, as he was,

servants of all, without exception and without demanding presumed ‘rights’ derived from our age, our economic or social situation, our successes, etc. The teaching of Jesus is very clear: that the greatest among you must become like the least, and he who commands must be like he who serves.

What is our attitude on this point? Unfortunately, we live in a society which is highly competitive, in which, for many, the only important thing seems to be personal success at any cost—at the price of disregarding the most elementary duties, such as, for example, careful attention to one’s spouse, to one’s parents, to one’s children, relationships of loyalty towards friends and companions; and even at the price of treading upon the strictest obligations of justice and charity towards our neighbor.

The path to following in the footsteps of Christ is radically different. Certainly Christians who are trying to sanctify themselves in the world have to make an effort every day to attain the highest possible prestige in their profession or position. They should make the gifts they have received from God bear fruit, since they will one day have to render an account to God. But they should do this not because of an egotistic personal self-affirmation, but in order to serve their fellow men with greater efficacy. In the words of the founder of Opus Dei, I say to you: "We have to forget ourselves, not aspiring to any other mastery than that of serving others, as did Jesus Christ. . . . This requires the fortitude of submitting one's own will to the divine model, working for all, struggling for the eternal happiness and welfare of others. I know no better path to being just," St.

Josemaría concluded, “than that of a life of dedication and of service.”

The kingdom of God is constructed in history. It is not built in a spectacular way, but especially in the intimacy of hearts. It is not shown in banners fluttering in the wind, but in the humility of the fulfillment of one’s duty and of daily service.

When fathers and mothers care for their home with love and are concerned about the Christian education of their children, they are building the Kingdom of God. When professionals, workers, or students carry out their work well, for love of God and neighbor, they are building the Kingdom of God. When businessmen or politicians legitimately try to increase their influence in society, trying to contribute to the realization of the common good with personal sacrifice, renouncing the use of

means forbidden by a Christian conscience, they are building the Kingdom of God. When sick people offer our Lord their pain and limitations, uniting them to Christ on the Cross, they are building, in a very effective way, the Kingdom of God.

Let us keep this reality present, my dear brothers and sisters, at every moment and in every circumstance: especially when the propagation of evil can make a feeling of sorrow or discouragement rise within us.

When you [deacons] perform your services, both in the liturgical sphere and in that of teaching or charity, Christ himself is serving men and women by means of you. What great joy is derived from the fact of truly serving others! Let us serve then with a joyful face because God loves the cheerful giver. Let us always serve the Lord with cheerfulness.

Editor's note -- The new deacons are: Santiago Álvarez; Paolo Arcara; Ignacio Barrera; Randifer Boquiren, Leo Bravo; Ignacio Carriazo; Andrea Cumin; Hugo Dávila; Pablo Edo; Gabriel Fernandez Castiella; Ricardo Furber; Anthony Gichuki; Eduardo Gil; Eugen Graas; Justin Gillespie; Efraim Hennessey Preciado; Josemaría Hernández; Andreas Kuhlmann; José María Lix-Klett; Estanislao Mazzuchelli Urquijo; Fabrizio Melchiori; Fernando Milán; Félix Navarro; Freddy Ngandu Muteba; Francisco Olalla Gallo; Brendan O'Connor; Andrew Paris; Stephan Patt; Pablo Pérez Rubio; Fabio Quartulli; Carlos Ruiz Montoya; Luis Armando Silva; Lloyd Singco; Andrés Felipe Suárez; Juan Manuel Varas; Francisco Vera Zorrilla; Carlos Villar; Pedro Willemsens.

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