



The Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei

The personal prelature known generally as Opus Dei¹ is unique in the Catholic Church, a prelature² organized around an idea, rather than geographical representation. It is the youngest prelature in the Church, and one of the most active. Even many of those who have not officially joined the prelature subscribe to the ideas and ideals of Opus Dei.

To many people, Opus Dei is the “conservative” branch of the Church, but that is a simplification at best, and a distortion at worst. It’s certainly true that you hold the line against modern encroachments on the rules and traditions of the church - you are against women priests, in favor of the sanctity of marriage, opposed to the decadence of modern culture. But “conservative” is mainly and originally a political category which is perverted when used for religious, moral, and intellectual matters. These should be categorised as either faithful or heretical, good or evil, true or false. You are faithful, good, and true. If that aligns you, politically, with conservatives, well, what does that say about the “liberals”?

You are called, throughout your life, to do the work of God. A virtuous member of Opus Dei obeys the rules of God as laid down in the Bible and the traditions of the Catholic Church. They pray daily, give as much as they can to charity, and try to live a life in unity with God’s wishes. Some members of Opus Dei practice mortification³, “prayer of the senses,” in order to deal with their sins.

Note: Items of the Credo that you care most about include “For us men and our salvation he came down from heaven. By the power of the Holy Spirit, he was born of the virgin Mary and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontias Pilate; he suffered, died and was buried.” and “The Shepherd is the spiritual head of the church, the supreme judge of the faithful. When he speaks with his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole church, he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed His church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals.” and “Only in the marital relationship may the sexual faculty be morally good. A marital relation can exist only between a man and a woman, as God created them, man and woman. The homosexual tendency, which is neither procreative nor unitive, is an inclination towards a moral disorder; homosexual behavior is a sin.” and “Marriage is a lifelong sacrament which cannot be dissolved. The sexual relationship is procreative in nature, and to deny that via birth control is a sin. Life begins at conception.”

You don’t so much care about “The Sabbath, the day on which the Lord rested, is Sunday.”

¹Latin for “Work of God”

²Basically, a prelature is a subdivision of the church with its own leader, whether that leader is a bishop, an abbot, or whatever.

³The subjection and denial of bodily passions and appetites by abstinence or self-inflicted pain.