

Daily Meditation 06-29-22

Supreme Court Judges Sharing an Opus Dei Seal of Approval

Good morning.

Today we have the unsavory experience of reflecting on Opus Dei. But these things must be known; they must be spoken about: the fact that one man, an Opus Dei operative, working out of the Federalist Society, put forward the five names that are on the Supreme Court now, who are working, seems to me, much more of a religious ideology than out of a critical sense of jurisprudence.

Now I cite Walsh, an ex-Jesuit priest who did serious study of Opus Dei, and this is in my book, The Pope's War, where he says that Escriva, the founder of Opus Dei, his canonization was "something he connived at." Says Walsh, "Given the power and the wealth of Opus Dei, the canonization of its founder seems inevitable." This was written before he was canonized. "Escriva has friends at court."

And they did not allow people who knew Escriva very well to give their ultimate opinions in the canonization process: they eliminated the devil's advocate, in other words. A fellow named Vladimir Felzmann claimed that he knew from personal knowledge that Escriva was sympathetic to Hitler; that Escriva had considered joining the Greek Orthodox Church because he was so in opposition to Vatican II, and he had a severe temper and expressed it on many occasions.

And Maria del Carmen Tapia, who worked with him for 18 years, and was his private secretary for seven years, had many stories to tell and was very concerned. She said there was a constant sexual obsession within Opus Dei; that women, female students, were never allowed to be spontaneous in their ordinary life as residents in the university. There was a restriction of reading materials, no discussion of world religions whatsoever. Mail was opened and confiscated. Surveillance of members was common. Microphones were placed in various rooms of residences, and they were connected to Escriva's room. A cultic worship of Father Escriva abounded with constant talk of "the Father has said," "the father passed through here". She says it was

...like a police state between the coldness of the superiors, my reclusion, the commandments from on high, and the letter of the spirit instead of the spirit of the letter." The theological developments of the Second Vatican Council were ignored and disparaged. Many things and many individuals were silenced in Opus Dei. They disappeared in silence: those who left Opus Dei, those who committed suicide or tried to; those who became insane, are never mentioned. Even great care is taken not to mention priests who leave Opus Dei.

And those who do leave, like herself, regarded it as "a sect which has managed to lodge itself within Catholicism."

And it was deeply anti-intellectual. She says,

Opus Dei silences critical minds. As soon as someone who may even be a priest is outstanding in the field of philosophy or theology, Opus Dei will almost certainly end by silencing him. He disappears; Opus Dei hides them. Frequently they end up leaving the institution or becoming the patient of a psychiatrist.

The fact that Escriva gathered fancy titles for himself, Walsh says, is "totally unheard-of behavior in any other saint.... It is a clear case of embarrassment to his biographers."

And Escriva could not be alone. He was

...rough, brusque and rude. When he was angry, and had someone to reproach, he had no control in his language. His offensive, violent words profoundly wounded (people).... If a fried egg was not done to his taste, he would abuse the director of the house. If an altar cloth did not hang exactly as stipulated...

he would scold the director, or if there was a noise in the kitchen when the pots and pans were scrubbed.

And Tapia said, "during the last years of his life, I'm convinced Monsignor Escriva suffered from a psychological disorder."

So it's not a pretty picture. But this is the organization that has been appointing Supreme Court judges for decades. It might explain a few of the problems we're in today.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.