

The Servants of God

Paquita and Tomás Alvira

Love the Science of the Cross

In 1970, Saint Josemaría wrote: ***We must live on the Cross and love the science of the Cross.***

The mystery of the Cross is at the very centre of Christian life.

The crosses they encountered during their life were for the Alvira couple a meeting with the Cross of Christ. The way they faced difficulties could only be fruit of a deep faith and an unconditional self-giving. That is why they were always happy. One of their daughters recalls: *The things that might have made my parents suffer were almost all unknown to me. The fruit of their sufferings were for God. They never felt like victims.*¹

One of their greatest sorrows was the death of their son José María, at the age of five. They hardly ever spoke about it and when they did, they added: *He will open for us the gates of heaven.* Years later, Paquita wrote to a niece and nephew who had just lost their first child hours after the birth: *I can imagine what you two are going through, wondering how our Lord*

*could do this to you... What I am going to say is going to sound crazy, but ... it is because God had trust in you. He knew you would go on loving him and trusting in him; and out of this misfortune he will draw many good things for you. That is what he did for Tomás and me. When we were so happy seeing our José María... in a matter of hours he took him to heaven. For us it seemed that all joy had gone out of life. The suffering was enormous. But God is a Father, and always seeks our good... even when we don't perceive it. You can be sure that everything that has happened will bring you an abundance of blessings and good things... Ask Our Lady of the Pillar for the strength you need so much now, and before long joy will again be yours.*²

When Paquita was left paralyzed after a stroke, she wrote to one of her sons: *I don't ask you to*

*pray for me to recover faster, because everything that is happening to me is doing me a lot of good. I must need it as expiation for my many lacks of love and gratitude.*³

Regarding Tomás, his daughter María Isabel recalls something that showed his love for the Cross. While with my father in the El Prado Museum, I was impressed by the comments he made in front of an El Greco painting. It was a Christ carrying the cross. We stopped before it and he said: *"Look how beautiful! The painting is not called: Christ carrying the cross, but Christ embracing the cross. Do you realize? Christ embracing the cross..."* This love for the Cross led him to turn to our Lord in the last stages of his long sickness, in which he suffered a lot, saying:

*Lord, I don't ask you to take away my sufferings, but give me the strength to bear them.*⁴

With Rafael, José María, Teresa and Pilar

1. Testimony of María Isabel Alvira 2. Letter to her niece and nephew Ana and José Luis, El Pinar del Plantío 12 August 1993 3. Letter to her son Tomás 4. Testimony of Nieves Alvira



Prayer for private devotion



God our Father, who filled your servants Paquita and Tomás with graces so that they could bring a truly Christian spirit to their married life and the fulfilment of their professional and social obligations, send us your powerful Love so that we may spread to those around us the message of the greatness of fidelity and holiness in marriage. Deign to glorify your servants Paquita and Tomás and, through their intercession, grant me the favour that I ask of you... (*here make your petition*). Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be

In conformity with the decrees of Pope Urban VIII, we declare that there is no intention of anticipating in any way the judgement of the Church, and that this prayer is not intended for public use.

Those who obtain favours through the intercession of the Alviras are asked to notify the Office for the Causes of Saints, Opus Dei Prelature in Britain: Email: ocs.uk@opusdei.org

News of their Causes

The Dicastery for the Causes of Saints has declared the validity of the diocesan processes and has started to edit the respective *Positiones*.

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Favours

My husband, Philip, was admitted to hospital very ill with the Guillain-Barré syndrome, a neurological sickness in which the immune system attacks the body and harms the nerves. He could not walk and the muscles in his hands and arms were very weak. I could not see him and accompany him physically on account of the pandemic. I began to pray the prayer card to Paquita and Tomás and asked through a friend that one of their daughters, who I know, help me to pray. Six weeks later Philip has been able to walk for the first time. Even the doctors say that such a quick recovery was beyond science and the prognosis. This is a favour of the Alviras!

C.S.

I want to report a great favour that I attribute to the intercession of the Alvira couple. It concerns the cure of my sister and her husband, who both contracted the coronavirus, and have now been declared fully recovered by the doctor.

In the case of my sister there is no doubt that she was at death's door and the same could have happened to my brother-in-law had his wife not urged him to go to hospital when he was confirmed seriously affected and in danger of death.

As soon as I learned how serious my sister's condition was I began a daily novena to the servants of God Tomás and Paquita asking for her complete cure, and, when two days later her husband was admitted, I included him in this petition. There followed two long weeks of anguish, coupled with hope – I would say certainty – that Tomás and Paquita would obtain their cure, at the same time sure that it would happen without anything extraordinary, beyond the irrefutable risk of death over a two week period.

My brother-in-law and especially my sister (who, on regaining consciousness, gave a vivid description of having lived what characterizes some agonies) are convinced that there was an extraordinary intervention in their cure.

A.A.