

CONGREGATION FOR THE CAUSES OF SAINTS

MADRID

BEATIFICATION and CANONISATION

OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

MARIA GUADALUPE ORTIZ DE LANDAZURI

LAYWOMAN

OF THE PERSONAL PRELATURE OF THE HOLY CROSS AND OPUS DEI

(1916–1975)

DECREE ON THE VIRTUES

“God loves a cheerful giver” (2 *Cor* 9:7).

The Servant of God Guadalupe Ortiz de Landazuri surrendered herself completely and joyfully to God and to the service of his Church, and intensely experienced divine love.

Guadalupe was born in Madrid, Spain, on 12 December 1916. She was the youngest of the four children of Manuel and Eulogia Ortiz. Her father was an army officer and as such was repeatedly posted to different places. From 1927 to 1932 he, Eulogia and Guadalupe lived in North Africa; Guadalupe went to the school run by the religious of the Company of Mary in Tétouan, Morocco. From her childhood onwards, the Servant of God was endowed with a strong, courageous character.

In 1933 she completed her secondary schooling in Madrid and enrolled at Madrid University to study Chemistry. In July 1936, shortly after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, her father was arrested and summarily sentenced to death. Guadalupe, her mother and her brother, were able to speak to her father before he was shot, consoling him and helping him to accept death in a

Christian spirit. The Servant of God forgave those who had caused her father's death.

After the Spanish Civil War ended, she continued her studies with great application and diligence. In 1941 she began studying for a doctorate in Chemistry, while teaching at a secondary school. On 25 January 1944 she first met St Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei, who became her spiritual director. From that point on Guadalupe dedicated herself intensely to prayer and, after a spiritual retreat lasting several days, she asked to be admitted to Opus Dei on 19 March that same year, living in apostolic celibacy. She understood clearly that God was calling her to serve Holy Church through work done for love and through apostolate in the circumstances of ordinary life.

St Josemaría put her in charge of some evangelization projects in Madrid and Bilbao. In October 1947 Guadalupe returned to the university to pursue her doctoral studies. At the end of 1949 she was asked whether she would be willing to move to Mexico to begin Opus Dei's apostolate there.

Guadalupe prepared for this new undertaking with faith and enthusiasm. On 5 March 1950 she and two other women of Opus Dei moved to Mexico City. In April that year they opened a hall of residence for women university students, some of whom still remember the care that the Servant of God dedicated to their Christian formation. With them, she taught catechism classes to children from deprived areas. She also cared for the sick at a mobile clinic she set up with the help of a friend of hers who was a doctor.

In agreement with the Bishop of Tacambaro, she devoted her best efforts to improving the living conditions of the young countrywomen of the area, enabling them to learn manual skills, reading and writing. Despite the precarious means of transport available, she would travel to different locations to visit these young women's families. She faced dangers and difficulties with admirable fortitude, and showed affection and great patience in providing the young women with basic human and Christian formation. Soon these apostolic activities spread to other townships in Mexico. In 1952 Guadalupe helped with the beginnings of the apostolate being done at an old farming estate called Montefalco. At the cost of great sacrifices, and with the help of many people, the dilapidated estate was transformed into a retreat centre, plus a farm-school and a centre for job skills training and basic literacy.

In 1956 the Servant of God was called to Rome to help St Josemaría in the governance of the apostolate of the women of Opus Dei. But a few months later Guadalupe fell ill with a serious heart problem, and in July 1957 underwent major surgery. From 1958 onwards she lived in Madrid, Spain, where she taught at a school and afterwards at an industrial training school for women. In 1965 she gained her doctorate in Chemistry and was unanimously

awarded a prize for her doctoral thesis. Despite her poor health she continued to dedicate herself with care and enthusiasm to the apostolate with young women. She was also in charge of a catering training centre and other projects.

In the early 1970s her heart condition worsened, and on 1 July 1975 she had a high-risk heart operation. During the recovery period she suffered a sudden crisis and on 16 July, the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, she devoutly surrendered her soul to God.

Guadalupe's outstanding characteristics were her contagious cheerfulness, her fortitude in the face of adversity, her Christian optimism in difficult circumstances, and her self-giving to others. Her theological faith shone out in her love for the Blessed Eucharist and her joyous acceptance of God's Will. She cultivated the virtue of hope, constantly refining and purifying it with the passage of time. She practised charity for God and her neighbour to a heroic degree. She put great piety into devotional exercises and would often spend time in prayer before the Tabernacle. Impelled by divine grace, she achieved a harmoniously unified life and offered all the various tasks of her daily life to God. She prayed with love and affection to the Blessed Virgin Mary, especially under the avocation "Our Lady of Guadalupe".

She had a lively concern for the needs of others. She treated university students, farm-girls, schoolgirls and her friends with the same sensitivity and friendliness.

She was always ready to be useful to others and to obey. She was endowed with many human and professional gifts, but never boasted of them; on the contrary, she was quick to serve others and chose the humblest tasks for herself. She lived with great sobriety and cheerfully accepted the privations she often encountered on beginning the apostolate in a new place. She carried out the tasks entrusted to her with tenacity and perfection, and used her free time on worthwhile occupations, being approachable and always ready to make herself available. When she fell ill, she did all she could to persevere in fulfilling her duties.

The diocesan process concerning her life, virtues and reputation for holiness was carried out in the Curia of the Archdiocese of Madrid. It opened on 18 November 2001 and was concluded on 18 March 2005. The Congregation for the Causes of Saints issued a decree of its validity on 17 February 2006. Once the *Positio* had been completed, the next stage, according to the established procedure, was to examine whether the Servant of God had practised the virtues heroically. On 7 June 2016 the special Congress of theological consultants took place, and answered this question in the affirmative. The Cardinals and Bishops, in an ordinary session held on 2 May 2017,

presided by myself, Cardinal Angelo Amato, recognised that Guadalupe had exercised the theological, cardinal and related virtues to a heroic degree.

The undersigned Cardinal Prefect presented to the Supreme Pontiff Pope Francis a detailed account of all the phases listed above. The Holy Father, receiving and ratifying the evaluation of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, with today's date, has solemnly declared that: *Proofs exist of the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, towards both God and neighbour, and also of the cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Fortitude, with their annexed virtues, in heroic degree, of the Servant of God Maria Guadalupe Ortiz de Landazuri, laywoman of the Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei, according to the requirements of the case.*

The Holy Father has ordered that this Decree be published and transcribed in the Acts of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Given at Rome, on the 4th day of the month of May in the year of Our Lord 2017.

ANGELO CARDINAL AMATO, S. D. B.

Prefect

L. + S.

✠ MARCELLO BARTOLUCCI

Titular Archbishop of Bevagna

Secretary