

Opus Dei's Influence Over Governments



Opus Dei (English: Work of God) is an institution of the Catholic Church which was founded in Spain in 1928 by Josemaría Escrivá. Its stated mission is to help its lay and clerical members to seek Christian perfection in their everyday occupations and within their societies. Opus Dei is officially recognized within the Catholic Church, although its status has evolved. It received final approval by the Catholic Church in 1950 by Pope Pius XII. – Source: Wikipedia

That's Opus Dei according to Wikipedia. The following article tells us what Opus Dei is really all about.

Opus Dei's Influence Is Felt in All of Washington's Corridors of Power

This is a re-post from
<https://churchandstate.org.uk/2019/06/opus-deis-influence-is-felt-in-all-of-washingtons-corridors-of-power/>

By Betty Clermont | 22 January 2019

[The Open Tabernacle](#)



The United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. (Photo by ElevenPhotographs on [Unsplash](#))

The Opus Dei Catholic Information Center's "members and leaders continue to have an [outside impact on policy and politics](#). It is the conservative spiritual and intellectual center ... and its influence is felt in all of Washington's corridors of power," stated the *Washington Post*.

The Opus Dei Catholic Information Center's "members and leaders continue to have an outside impact on policy and politics".

<https://t.co/3BF0yEzU7A>

– Church and State (@ChurchAndStateN) [June 4, 2019](#)

In the past two decades, the center's "K Street NW location, just two blocks from the White House, became a bustling gathering place for [conservative academics, politicians, journalists, young professionals](#)." "The noon Mass became [known as a 'Who's Who'](#) scene in conservative circles" including "Judge Robert H. Bork, Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.), economist Larry Kudlow and former House speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.)."

Opus Dei's influence is enormous in the [U.S. judiciary](#).

"The center's board includes Leonard Leo, executive vice president of the Federalist Society, which helped shepherd the Supreme Court nominations of Brett M. Kavanaugh and Neil M. Gorsuch. White House counsel Pat Cipollone is a former board member, as is [William P. Barr](#), who served as attorney general under President George H.W. Bush and is now President Trump's nominee for the same position." Barr, a "committed Catholic," was highly recommended by [Leonard Leo](#).

The U.S. judiciary has been shaped not only through [Leo's control over Trump's judicial appointments](#) but also by the [Judicial Crisis Network](#) (JCN) directed by Leo and [run by Carrie Severino](#), a former law clerk for supreme court justice Clarence Thomas.

The JCN is a 501(c)(4) organization, meaning its donors are secret. "It has spent millions across the country [to influence the elections of judges and attorneys general](#) as well as judicial appointment and confirmation processes."

"Leo's efforts to ensure that Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito were confirmed engaged [the dark money spending power of JCN](#). In 2005 and 2006, Leo and the Federalist Society worked with JCN to coordinate radio and online ads as well as on grassroots efforts to support the confirmation of the right-wing justices.

To block the appointment of Barack Obama's choice, Merrick Garland, and support the confirmation of Justice Gorsuch, Leo helped coordinate the JCN's expenditure of \$17 million. The campaign was highly effective in allowing Gorsuch, the Federalist Society's pick, to take the place many thought rightly belonged to Merrick Garland."

The Secret Money Behind the Push to Ban Abortion –
<https://t.co/zFFIPVVNyJ> via [@commondreams](#)

– Church and State (@ChurchAndStateN) [June 4, 2019](#)

What is Opus Dei

Opus Dei is a secret society and an [official arm](#) of the Catholic Church as I've noted before but bears repeating. Its roots are in [fascist Spain](#).

In 1982, Pope John Paul II designated the group as a "personal prelature," that is, they are under the sole jurisdiction of the pope and no other prelate. Its website states, "Opus Dei's [mission](#) is to spread the Christian message that every person is called to holiness and that every honest work can be sanctified." As of 2017 there were [92,892 lay members](#) and 2,212 priests worldwide.

[Non-Catholics are welcomed](#) as "cooperators" who "assist the educational and social undertakings promoted by the Prelature." Priests not ordained into Opus Dei can be a member of the [Priestly Society](#) of the Holy Cross, "intrinsically united to the Prelature."

Only the identities of Opus Dei priests are public. Members of the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross and all lay members' and cooperators' names are secret unless self-disclosed, for example by being openly affiliated with the Catholic Information Center.

At the top:

"Opus Dei is an efficient machine run to [achieve worldly power](#)," wrote investigative reporter Penny Lernoux in her book, *People of God*.

"Opus Dei pursues the Vatican's agenda through the presence of its members in secular governments and institutions and through a vast array of academic, medical, and grassroots pursuits. Its constant effort [is] to [increase its presence in civil institutions of power](#). [T]heir work in the public sphere breaches the church-state division that is fundamental to modern democracy," noted Gordon Urquhart, author of *The Pope's Armada: Unlocking the Secrets of Mysterious and Powerful New Sects in the Church* (1995).

"Opus Dei uses the Catholic Church for its own ends which are money and power ... Its members form a transnational elite. They seek to colonize the summits of power. They work with stealth – 'holy discretion' – and [practice 'divine deception'](#)," Robert Hutchison wrote in the introduction to his book, *Their Kingdom Come: Inside the Secret World of Opus Dei*.

"Opus Dei is mostly middle- and upper-class businessmen, [professionals, military personnel and government officials](#). Its members control a large number of banks and [financial institutions](#)," according to Martin A. Lee, author and activist who has written books and articles on far-right movements.

Other Government Agencies Influenced by Opus Dei

Because it is a secret society, usually we can only know government officials' affiliations with Opus Dei.

[Roger Severino](#), Carrie Severino's husband, is Trump's Director of the Office

for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Severino was a trial attorney for seven years in the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

Larry Kudlow is Trump's director of the National Economic Council. [Plutocracy is "just what America needs,"](#) Kudlow wrote in December 2016. "Putting the incredibly wealthy in charge of the U.S. government" is described as Kudlow's great idea.

Former Kansas Gov. [Sam Brownback](#) is now Trump's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

So, who's visiting Trump's OMB director Mick Mulvaney?

- Wall Street CEOs
- Koch lobbyists
- Opus Dei members

and billionaires. Quite a lot of billionaires.

<https://t.co/uHfzppPD77>

– ProPublica (@propublica) [November 24, 2017](#)

Mick Mulvaney is serving as Trump's acting White House Chief of Staff. He remains director of the White House Office of Management and Budget and interim head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Mulvaney "has reportedly met with a long list of lobbyists, corporate executives and wealthy people with business interests before the government." His meeting with Opus Dei's Jeff Bell, [architect of Reaganomics](#), covered "[religious and political matters](#)."

As an example of Opus Dei-affiliated [military personnel](#), veteran investigative reporter Seymour Hersh "claimed that Gen. Stanley McChrystal, Vice Admiral William McRaven and others in the JSOC were members of the Knights of Malta and Opus Dei." JSOC is "the [elite Special Ops force](#)" who killed Osama bin Laden. "We're gonna change mosques into cathedrals ... This is not an atypical attitude among some military – it's a crusade, literally," Hersh reported. "He added that members of these societies have developed [a secret set of insignias](#) that represent 'the whole notion that this is a culture war' between religions."

Vatican Connection

That Newt Gingrich is close to Opus Dei helps explain Trump's appointment of Callista Gingrich as U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican. (Newt's [three marriages](#) would have raised eyebrows in the Vatican diplomatic corps even though the first two were [annulled](#) when he became Catholic and married Callista.)

Newt was an [early](#) and [constant](#) supporter of Trump. He provides Pope Francis with direct access to Trump. For Trump, he has trusted emissary in a diplomatic corps described as a "[prime listening post](#)" in global affairs.

[Trump attended](#) Callista's swearing in ceremony in October 2017.

The U.S. Embassy to the Vatican also has a "[Political and Economic Chief](#)" and two "Political and Economic Officers."

"Political" officers are understandable given that Trump and Pope Francis share so many positions such as restricting women's access to [abortion](#) and [contraception](#), restricting [LGBTQI](#) and [transgender](#) human rights and, most importantly, continued [tax-payer funding](#) of Catholic charities, schools and hospitals.

Pope Francis might have a more benign view on immigration, but he does agree that "a country has the [right to protect its borders](#)." For all his rhetoric – and in spite of [billions of dollars](#) of personal income – Pope Francis has sponsored only [six refugee families](#) even though the Vatican owns "[thousands](#)" of apartments in Rome.

The necessity for "economic" officers is less obvious. The pope is also head of a global network that can act as a conduit for "dark money" thanks to "religious" exemptions granting the Church [monetary secrecy](#) in the world's financial centers. That is a magnate for Opus Dei to maintain power inside the Catholic Church.

Pope Francis has made sure that the Vatican retains its expertise and capacity in this regard. He has hired and appointed [vulture capitalists](#) and [Opus Dei members](#) and associates to manage his assets. And now he has an American ambassador and embassy staff as allies.

Betty Clermont is author of [The Neo-Catholics: Implementing Christian Nationalism in America](#) (Clarity Press, 2009).