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新 events

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新聞摘要

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2007/03/19

天主的朋友

宗徒是耶穌旅途的伙伴，是耶穌的朋友。他們與耶穌一起的旅程不只是由加里肋亞到耶路撒冷的塵世旅程，也是他們學習信仰耶穌基督的內修旅程。這旅程並非沒有困難的，因為他們和我們一樣是凡人。

但正是因為他們是耶穌的旅伴，是耶穌的朋友，在艱辛的旅途中學習信仰，他們成為我們的嚮導，他們幫助我們去認識耶穌基督，去愛祂和信賴祂。(2006年8月9日之公眾會晤)

與耶穌親近

我們可以想像斐理伯向納塔乃耳說的那兩個動詞：「來」和「看」也是同樣為我們說的。這兩個動詞包含着個人參與的暗示。宗徒要我們埋首於親密地認識耶穌。

實際上，友誼，即對另一人的真正認識，要求親密的接近，而某程度上也需要生活出來。此外，我們亦要記着馬爾谷所載的話：耶穌選定了十二位，「為同他常在一起」(谷3:14)。這就是說，要分享他的生命，直接地從他那裏學習。而且，不只是學習他的風格和態度，更是要認識他真正是誰。

事實上，唯有如此，即參與他的生命，門徒們才能認識他，繼而宣揚他。

其後，在保祿致厄弗所書中，我們可看到最重要的是去「學習基督」(弗4:20)。故此，不只是去聆聽他的教導和訓言，而是要去認識他本身，即他的人性 and 神聖性，並認識他的奧妙和美善。事實上，他不只是導師，也是一個朋友，更好說是一個兄長。

然而，我們如保持距離，又怎能正確地認識他呢？親近、交往和習慣幫助我們發現耶穌基督的真正身份。斐理伯宗徒正是這樣提醒我們。所以，他邀請我們「來」和「看」，就是透過聆聽、回應及與耶穌的生命共融，日復日地接觸他。(2006年9月6日之公眾會晤)



青年與承諾

至聖的父親，剛好一年前，當你在科倫與青年見面時，你經驗到青年們去歡迎他人的那份令人驚訝的自發性，而你也親身體驗到他們熱烈的歡迎。當你下次出訪時，你可會給青年們一個特別的訊息？



首先，我感到非常高興青年們願意聚在一起，他們願意因信仰而聚在一起，而且願意行善的事。只要想到青年們所做的各種義務工作便知他們對行善有很強的傾向。

承諾奉上個人的貢獻去幫助世界上有需要的人是件偉大的事。我想，其中一項構想是鼓勵他們在這方面發展：繼續下去吧！找尋行善的機會吧！世界需要這種行善的慾望，它需要這種承諾。

此外，另一個訊息也許是這樣吧：要有作出確切決定的勇氣！青年們是非常慷慨的，但當他們面對一個終身承諾的挑戰時，哪管是婚姻的或作司鐸的聖召，他們往往感到害怕。

世界正戲劇性地在變動：現今的思潮是我可以不斷地在生命中做自己想做的事，儘管將來的事是多麼不可預計。然而，要去作出一個確切的決定，我豈不把我個人的自由困綁？不是剝奪了自己的行動自由？

重新喚醒作出確切決定的勇氣：這樣做才是唯一讓我們成長，讓我們向前邁進和讓我們的生命達致某種高尚的素質。這種決定不會損毀我們的自由，反而有助指示出我們正確的方向。冒險作出這個跳躍，即是說，作明確的決定和完整地擁抱生命：這是我樂意告訴他們的。(2006年8月5日之面談)

教育：作出確切決定的勇氣

真正的教育一定要喚醒作出確切決定的勇氣。這種做法在現今被視為自我束縛的克苦。但實際上，這種做法是成長和讓生命達致某種高尚的素質不可缺少的。尤其甚者，這種做法讓愛趨向成熟和達致它本有的美善：故此，是給予自由由其一貫性和意義。

基於這種對人性和人靈培育的掛慮，我們要對軟弱和脫軌的愛及虛假的自由說「不」，亦要留意理性被降格到只包括可預想的和可操控的範疇。而事實卻是，這些「不」實在是對真正的愛說「是」，是人作為天主受造物的本質這個事實的肯定。(2006年10月19日之講詞)

成聖之美，和那個富少年

今天，四位新聖人被推薦給普世教會作敬禮：Rafael Guizar y Valencia, Filippo Smaldone, Rose Venerini 和 Theodore Guerin。他們的名字會永遠被追憶。

與此對比的讓我立刻想到那個剛剛在福音宣讀中提到的「富少年」。這個少年是無名的，倘若他曾向耶穌的邀請作出正面的回應，他大概會成為耶穌的門徒而聖史大概會把他的名字記錄下來。

由此，我們可立刻警見本星期日的聖道禮儀的主題：如果有人把期望放於現世的財富，他不能達致生命和真正喜樂的完滿意義。但倘若人信賴天主的聖言，因天國的緣故棄絕自我和物慾，表面上損失了許多，但實際上他卻賺取了全部。

聖人正是那位向基督的召叫喜樂地和慷慨地回應的男女，他/她捨棄一切跟隨基督。如伯多祿和其他宗徒，又如聖女大德蘭在今天提醒我們及無數其他天主的朋友般，這些被封的新聖人也曾在此嚴苛和令人歡愉的福音旅程中走過，他們已經在此世獲得了「一百倍」的賞報，同時也經過考驗和迫害，獲得永遠的生命。(2006年10月15日之講道詞)

信賴天主的喜樂

但我們要怎樣才能是聖的，是天主的朋友？

我們可以首先給予此問題一個否定的答案。要成聖並不需要非凡的行動或擁有異常的神恩。然後，正面的回應包括：最首要的是要聽從耶穌基督，繼而儘管面對困難都不失信心地跟隨他。他訓戒我們：「誰若侍奉我，就當跟隨我；如此，我在那裏，我的僕人也要在那裏；誰若侍奉我，我父必尊重他。」(若12:26)

有如一粒麥子死了埋在土裏，那些信賴和真誠地愛慕天主的人接受自我的死亡。事實上，他知道那些愛惜自己性命的，必要喪失生命；而那些付出並失去自己性命的，必要因此而找到性命。(參照若12:24-25)

教會的經驗顯示任何一種成聖的方法，即使有不同的途徑，均是通過十字苦路，自我棄絕的道路。

聖人傳記中常描述那些順從天主計劃的男女，他們有時會面對不可言喻的考驗和痛苦，迫害和殉難。他們堅守他們的承諾：我們可從默示錄指示看到「這些人是由大災難中來的，他們曾在羔羊的血中洗淨了自己的衣裳，使衣裳雪白」(默7:14)。他們的名字被記在生命冊中(參照默20:12)而天堂是他們永久的居所。

聖人們的榜樣鼓勵我們去跟隨他們的腳步和去經驗那種信賴天主的喜悅，因為遠離天主是悲哀和不幸的真正原因。

聖德要求繼續不斷的努力，但聖德為每個人成為可能並非依賴人為的努力，而首要的因素是聖德乃天主的禮物，是聖、聖、聖的(參照依6:3)。在讀經二中，若望宗徒講述：「請看父賜給我們何等的愛情，使我們得稱為天主的子女，而且我們也真是如此。」(若一3:1)



是天主首先愛了我們，使我們因耶穌成為天主的義子女。我們生命中的每件事都是他愛的禮物：我們面對這個如此偉大的奧蹟怎能莫不關心？我們怎能不如懂得感恩的孩子般回應天父的愛？在基督內，他給了我們他整個存有，他召叫我們與他建立個人及深厚的關係。

因此，我們越仿效耶穌並與他結合，我們便能更深入他神聖的奧蹟中。我們會發現他無止境地愛着我們，這正好促使我們去愛我們的弟兄。愛常常伴隨着自我棄絕的行動，「失去自己」，正是這樣我們能得到快樂。（2006年11月1日之講道詞）

青年

青年渴望知道天主是否存在，也渴望知道天主要告訴他們甚麼。因此，儘管面對這個時代的各種問題，青年們仍擁有相當的自發性，在他們中是有熱忱的。故此，我們必須盡我們之所能，保持這種在不同的場合如普世青年節中顯示出來的活潑的心火。

我們要做甚麼？這是我們共同的問題……依我所見，要在主教的調和下找出一個方法，一方面聚合青年們在堂區，使他們成為堂區生活的酵母。另一方面，要為這些青年們提供堂區職掌以外的幫助。這兩方面必須協力進行。

我們有必要告訴青年們他們不只在堂區內，甚至要在不同的境況中參與教區的生活，為了其後再在堂區中相聚活現出來。所以，我們需要鼓勵所有自發機構在這方向協力。

我認為志願服務的經驗在今天是很重要的。青年們不可任由娛樂場所的操縱，重要的是要給予他們有意義的任務，肯定他們，讓他們知道自己是可行善的事。

透過這種能為整個人類，為某些人，某團體作出有意義的善行的推動力，青年們也會有意識地努力尋找積極的承諾，合乎基督徒倫理的「軌道」。

我認為青年們能真正的找到一份可以顯示出他們是被肯定的差事是非常重要的。這差事能在基督愛世人的鼓舞下指導他們積極地作出服務，使他們能找尋那獲得力量與承諾的源頭。（2006年8月31日之講詞）

幽默感

幽默感在教宗的生活中佔甚麼角色？

我不是一個恆常會想到說笑話的人，但我認為能看到生命中幽默的一面，看到它喜樂的幅度和不要把每件事看得過份悲劇性是非常重要的。

這些為我的職務也是必須的。曾有一位作者說天使們之所以能飛是因為他們沒有把自己看得太嚴肅。如果我們不自以為很重要，也許我們都能躍飛一點點。（2006年8月5日之面談）



教宗本篤十六世最新力作《納匝肋的耶穌》

教宗最新力作《納匝肋的耶穌》發表會，維也納總主教順波恩樞機強調作者的心意不在激發爭論，但在使人更認識耶穌的形象

2007/04/15

（梵蒂岡電臺訊）

教宗本篤十六世最新力作《納匝肋的耶穌》新書發表會，四月十三日下午在梵蒂岡世界主教會議大廳舉行，教宗昔日當神學教授時代的高足，奧地利首都維也納的總主教克里斯托夫·順波恩（Cristoph Schonborn）是這場盛會的主要發言人，此外還有基督教瓦爾多派（Waldese）羅馬神學院院長達尼埃萊·加龍內教授，義大利著名哲學家、威尼斯前市長馬西莫·卡恰里教授等人。參與者除了許多國家的傳播媒體人士外，還有聖座各部會和義大利政界文化界要人。



教宗新書訂於四月十六日他八十大壽當天正式問世，義大利文版第一批已經印行三十五萬冊。不久的將來還有三十餘種語言譯本面世。封面上作者的名字若瑟·拉青格（Joseph Ratzinger）以很小的字號印出，為賦給這部四百多頁的大作適當的分量。事實上，這是作者窮一生之力，以一位基督徒的身份，從昔日的聖經解經學家，當然不是一位泛泛的解經學家，到後來的聖座主管普世教會信仰真理的信理部的掌門人，乃至成為教宗的內在研究思考成果。

這是本篤十六世擔任教宗兩年來第一部研究性質的出版著作。這部論著所談的耶穌，是從在約旦河受洗到在大伯爾山顯聖容為止。根據教宗的計畫，繼這部作品之後，教宗將繼續寫另一部書，內容將是兒童時代的耶穌和耶穌的死亡與復活。

順波恩樞機主教在發言中說：“如果媒體毫無畏懼地把他們表面上所謂的有關耶穌的歷史性新發現，在市場上大為行銷，那麼教會和聖經所談的耶穌基督豈不成了神父製造的騙局和教會的欺詐，而有關耶穌的真理豈不被特別是梵蒂岡內的陰謀者所掩蓋”。順波恩樞機主教強調：“其實不然，神學家拉青格在他書中所肯定的，乃是出自一位對聖經有專門研究，絕對通曉相關知識的人之手。他所介紹的耶穌從歷史角度看是有見識、通達情理和明智的，令人信服”。

這位身為道明會士的維也納總主教指出：教宗是使用歷史批判的方法來論述納匝肋的耶穌，超越純神學和牧靈的角度。他結論教宗這部大作說：“除了分析精湛美妙、充滿直覺和透視外，作者完全被一股對他現在有責任向世界上介紹的那位的熱衷所驅動。作者的書現在已經出現在市面廣場，給我們現代社會的論壇提供討論的資料。然而，作者教宗的心意並不在於激發爭論，雖然他知道反對的意見不會沒有，他唯一希望的是：使人增加與納匝肋的耶穌攸關生命的關係”。

處於東方轉捩點的二十五年

我們渴望把這個人性兼超性的喜悅傳給中國、亞洲以及其他各洲的每一個人是合邏輯的事；要如此做，為他們多多祈禱

2007/05/10

二十五年前在香港，一九八二年五月一日，第一間女子中心舉行了第一台彌撒。從那天起，我主在中心聖體櫃裏的存在即成為這城市中使徒工作的一支強心劑。

在這之前的幾年裏，香港常有從馬尼拉來的到訪。一九八一年，他們開始尋找一個合適的地點，作為這城市的第一間女子中心。十二月十號，即蘿瑞托聖母日，同時也感謝我們創辦人聖施禮華在天的代禱，一間位於港島合適的住宅終於落實了下來。一九八二年三月一日，主業會的三名女會員搬到香港，開展主業會第一間中心的



工作。兩個月以後，小聖堂已為舉行第一台彌撒及在聖體櫃內安放我主做好準備。



主業會監督及聖施禮華的繼承人，歐華路主教，對於這一切發展都給予了父親般的關注和他的禱告。在一九八二年二月底時，他寫信給這幾位正忙於為搬到香港而在做準備的女兒，同時也鼓勵她們：「懷著全世界弟兄姐妹的禱告和克己，尤其是最後這一年，你們的一切都準備妥當了。而且，你們也可依靠現在和將來，時刻給予你們看護及幫助的聖母瑪利亞的強大代禱。別忘記，我的女兒們，我們靈性生活及所做一切最好的根基，就是對聖母溫柔 and 孝道的奉獻。」

在新的中心裏，我們可以為朋友和那些渴望在她們信仰及靈性生活成長的人提供一些靈修活動。直到今天，中心也繼續這樣運用著。目前，主業會有三間中心為女子提供活動，一間在港島，兩間在九龍。也有同樣數目的中心為男子提供活動。

一九九六年，主業會監督，歐華路主教的繼承者蔡浩偉主教，於四月十五日至十八日，到訪了香港及澳門－東方的一個轉捩點兼中國的開端。四月十六日，他在那第一間中心的小聖堂裏為他的女兒們舉行了第一台彌撒。於彌撒結束後的感恩時，他在後面掛著小耶穌站在中國之后聖母瑪利亞腿上的東方畫的祭台聖體櫃前做了祈禱。



同一天下午，有全香港幾百人參加的一個聚會上，他說到：「我們渴望把這個人性兼超性的喜悅傳給中國、亞洲，以及其他各洲的每一個人是合邏輯的事。要如此做，我們應為他們多做祈禱。愛他們；把你的工作、你每天出現的困難為他們作出奉獻。藉著這一切，你正在為了他們更接近天主而打好根基。」

經聖施禮華代禱獲賜之恩惠

一如安排

我是一間德國航空公司的飛行員。我住在法蘭克福，但我申請調往杜塞爾道夫，因為我在那城市為我的家人——我的妻及我們期待的孩子，找到一間房子。當一切事物似乎進行得順利時，我們亦已經著手準備好那所房子，但由於人手短缺，他們取消了我的調動。我與經理及另一位人士商談，但沒有人明白我的困難或關注我的處境。連工會亦不為我提供協助。唯一的解決辦法是轉向聖施禮華，請求他助我解決這困難。突然間，每一個人都開始嘗試幫助，他們為這難題找到一個解決的方法，而我亦能夠一如安排得以遷移。

J.R., 德國
2007年4月10日

我取得了車票！

長久以來一直希望寫下兩次不同的旅程中聖施禮華給予的恩惠。第一次是在旅程當天出發前才獲得兩張車票。簡直令人驚訝，因為八月的假期在當天開始，而我要到西班牙南部一個著名的旅遊勝地。在前往火車站途中，我熱切地向主業會創辦人聖施禮華祈禱。我一直在票務部守候，等待機會買車票。在全無希望的情況下，最後竟能起行。

另外一個恩惠在一次返家鄉旅行中發生。我的父親已入了醫院幾個星期，我乘機前往探望他。因旅程遙遠而沒有直航飛機，所以需要轉機。我持有一張旅遊客位指定班機的機票。在探望期間醫院確定父親做手術的日子卻是我預定回程的日期。我留下陪伴父親至手術安全完成為止，當然也錯過了所訂的那班機。我祈求聖施禮華的轉禱好在後天可以成行。在第一程的機場，多得一位認識的朋友幫助，一切順利，但在轉機的一程，情況比較複雜。我需要出示醫生證明書，經過多次往返不同部門後，當然也向聖施禮華祈禱後，終於被允許登機。這真是一個很大的恩惠，因為我所持的那種機票其中一個條件是不可轉換班機，過期機票更不在話下。

E.N.V., 西班牙
2007年4月

一個微小但重要的恩惠

我答應過要寫下這個小恩惠。它雖然微小，但對我來說非常重要。我需要在400人前演說，這是我第一次在這麼多的聽眾前說話。當我練習時，說到某一地方聲線總會失靈。我並沒有誇大，試過十多次仍然如此。我對聖施禮華說：你面見教宗保祿六世時

激動而不能自持，求你多多幫忙，當我演說時不要讓我失控，不要讓我說不出話來。

演講前幾個鐘我再次練習，我的聲音第一次不會失控。我深知聖施禮華已聽到了我的祈禱，所以我充滿信心地赴會。我認為這已證明他賜給了恩惠。當真如此。此外，我還告訴他希望這見證可以被刊登出來，雖然這是一件艱難的事情，因為我不喜歡談論這樣私人的問題。那些難被討好及對此類事情素不感興趣的人竟向我道賀。我要在此表達謝意好能鼓勵更多人為每樣事情求主業會創辦人聖施禮華轉禱。

C.S., 西班牙
2007年4月28日

來之古巴

我住在古巴，我透過一位朋友得到了一本由主業會創辦人聖施禮華的“道路”我開始看這本書及慢慢默想，然後我的生命起了變化。我的信德變得更加肯定，和我知道天主是我們的父親，而且我知道在天國裡我有一位助佑者就是聖施禮華。每天早上，我都在同一個時間即時起床。我變得更有條理，而我的信德生活亦得到了一個新的方向。若可能的話，每人也應該看看這本書。它會在你生命中協助你。我現在隨時隨地把它帶在身邊。謝謝。

Lester, 古巴
2007年3月29日

你向那一位聖人祈禱？

我極之渴望能找到一份工作，這甚至變成了一個惡夢，而且我身心都精疲力竭了。我剛剛大學畢業，“沒有工作經驗”就是惡夢的原因。我簡直不相信擁有一個專業資格卻連找一份工作也這麼困難。之後有一天，我從朋友中認識聖施禮華。我了解他更多後，我開始向他連續了九天的祈禱。難以置信的是，我在未完成那九天的祈禱前已看到第一次的功效——得到了天主無限的憐憫。我收到了一些面試的電話，雖然這些工作我都不太感興趣，卻給予我希望。我每天都祈禱及透過正確的方向繼續努力，過了大約一個月後，我終於找到我夢寐以求的工作。我感謝天主，我的守護天使及聖施禮華（主業會的創辦人）。我現在在一間各方面都很好的公司工作。最近與一個朋友的閒談中，她聽過我的工作後十分驚訝地問，“究竟你向哪一位聖人祈禱呢？”

A.V.M. 墨西哥
2007年3月25日

一個小小的奇跡

感謝一個小小的奇跡... 我有一個三歲大，既活潑又能說話的可愛兒子，但是他對食物的口味卻很挑剔。自斷奶後，他對大多數食物幾乎都感到恐懼性的厭惡，長時期僅靠香腸和炸雞塊維生，而且一般來說拒絕嘗試任何新的東西。我對他在食物偏好方面要不斷做出特別安排，帶他去各個地方均成為一種令人沮喪的挑戰。他不能跟同伴們一起吃東西，而我必須另外為他準備食物帶去社交聚會。把他跟我沒有任何這些特別偏好的二兒子比較，只會更使我不解。

我朋友感到這對我造成了一種頗大的負擔，在我做禱告甚至去避靜時會分散我的思念。她建議我們用祈禱卡為聖施禮華行九天敬禮。就算從第一天起，當他向我們要了一塊晚飯吃的三文魚而令我們驚喜不已，我就看到了不同之處。第二天，在一個朋友家中，他第一次要求試試水煮蛋！他一直保持下去，直到他能吃三明治，飯，甚至乳酪（自從在八個月大時試過一瓶嬰兒乳製品後，他對任何形狀或形態的乳酪一律完全禁止）。在九天敬禮結束後，我認為他已治癒，現在已能正常飲食，就像別的孩子一樣。雖然這件事的輕重程度相對別的事情看來很小，但我想強調它是一個真的奇跡！感謝聖施禮華！

M. D., UK
April 29, 2007

她從昏迷中甦醒了過來

兩年前我三十一歲的女兒，洛珊娜，正昏迷在智拉亞的一間醫院裏。對於她能否康復過來，我們抱著很小的希望。兩周以後，有天早上，我參加了七點在主教堂的彌撒。當我感到我左邊有人在看著我時，我正站在進口附近。我並沒轉過頭去，因為我想專心望彌撒，但突然間我忍不住朝那邊看過去。我看到了一幅很大的聖施禮華的掛相。我告訴他，當我向天父做完禱告後，我會跟對我們女兒會康復過來已感絕望的妻子一起他的代禱。我於是對妻子說：“讓我們請求這位聖人在天主面前為女兒代禱吧。”並如次做了。

那天下午我去了醫院。我妻子甚至不敢查問新的消息，但是感謝天主，我女兒有了進展。第二天我找遍全城，想找一張主業會創辦人的祈禱卡或是照片，但都沒有找到。而另我大感驚奇的是，當我那天下午去看女兒的時候，她已在我進去時張開了眼睛。在她旁邊的玻璃扶手上，有人放了一張聖施禮華的祈禱卡。我以前沒見到過它，而我也並不知道是誰放在那裏的。現在他是我的恩人，所有事情的指引和支持。感謝你，聖施禮華！

I A S., Peru
March 28, 2007

我的無信已轉為根深柢固的承諾

當她首次聽到主業會的訊息時，她認為它是一個不可達到的理想。今天，潘愛麗是一名會員，而且她說：「我的無信已轉為根深柢固的承諾，更在天天成長著的。」

2007/05/29

「在世界中追求聖德和聖化工作」— 當我首次在主業會聽到這個說法時，我屏住了呼吸。我雖然是一名實踐的好教友，對這高超的意念仍感到是不可達的。

那想法自從我跟主業會的朋友們交往後已轉變了。從參與無數的教理班和避靜得到的經驗實在是美麗！每一課堂讓我知多些天主教的信仰，每一避靜讓我愛多些天主！



毫無疑問，我的無信已轉為根深柢固的承諾，更在天天成長著的。藉著信德，我可以在每一個醒著的時刻保持天主的臨在。

我每天工作八小時或有時十二小時。從前，我無法想像天主如何能加入我的時間表：祂只在我睡時或當我有空時才存在的。

但肯定地和慢慢地藉著祈禱，在日間保持天主的臨在已成為事實。我開始一個艱巨的旅程和記得無數次的失敗或忘記給祂時間。

我的主業會朋友也是跟我傾談的那一位，不斷告訴我祈禱生活是一道微斜坡，人不能立刻抵達頂點，必須試著一步一步向上行，這一直在鼓勵著我！

主業會已幫助了我成聖和充滿目的的。連在困難時我也感到更接近天主。在我生活中有天主，我便有力量和勇氣去面對生活和工作中的挑戰。

Incontro Romano 2007: 活出家庭生活，創建一個家的藝術

來自10個不同國家，280位參予者出席位於羅馬所舉行的一個以“活出家庭生活”為主題的會議。這次是2006年至2008年中，三個以同一主題之會議的第二部份，專注討論創造一個家與日常生活中的藝術文化和社會的關係。

這個Incontro Romano會議最近在羅馬舉行。280位來自10個不同的國家參予者分別來自德國、巴西、西班牙、意大利、法國、美國和香港，為他們講論的主題“活出家庭生活——家庭藝術”作出總結。

他們的發表和講論突出了其主題的優越性在於以藝術和文化角度去擔當創造一個家的日常工作的重要性，並怎樣影響別人的生命。

在會議的每一環節中，來自不同背景的參予者交換他們專業的經驗，使其內容變得更豐富。來自西班牙的雷切爾·肯達多Raquel Contador和蘇珊娜·卡西亞Susana Garcia發表了她們的演說主題“家庭藝術：有如一位藝術家”雷切爾說：「在日常家務中要活出藝術家的風度，需要一種認為值得的態度和不厭其煩地觀察身邊的事物。」如創造一個家庭這類直接照顧他人的工作，透過物質生活的點滴，可令到家人的生命更美好，日復一日，在他們的生命中留下一個被愛的印記。

她們繼續說：「一間清潔的房子，整潔的衣服，給壞了的燈炮換了個新，小心地處理的碗碟，這一切正反映出對他人和藹有禮的親切款待。」

會議的第二個部份推介了一個在“學習和工作中心”Centro de Estudio y Trabajo

(CET)的活動。當中，一些大學生接受一連串啟發推動家庭真正意義的培訓計劃，從而去學習專業地去料理家務。

來自香港的關慧儀帶來了她的主題“吃火鍋，滋味食品、快樂家庭”當中解釋火鍋是中國一種傳統的菜餚，所有人聚在一起邊煮邊吃，帶出其煮食簡便而又推動家庭生機的一種文化。

從法國Institut de Formation à l'Assistance來的克萊爾·瑪素亞Claire Mazoyer為大會發表了主要講論。瑪素亞教授說：「家人怎樣去活出那個家往往能反映出那個家庭的氣氛。與此同時，那些物質上的責任如日常的家務，不可能不傾注溫暖和生機，正因為那是由人去擔當並由人去接受的工程，否則，那就成了一個沒有人情味的結構罷了。」

「把家中事物打理得整整有條(秩序、和諧和清潔)能為家人帶來一處和平、寧靜和美好的休息之所。家務工作對於家庭內每一位成員的幸福有着直接的影響，家務工作是不可忽略的，能為從事家務的人帶來尊嚴和不斷成長。」

聖保羅市——合家歡電視節目

在2003年，一群專業人士成立了文化及時事趨向學會(Association for Culture and Current Events (ACEA))，致力於反映文化的道德性及人道性原則。它的首項活動乃一系列會議，名為“價值觀作為新社會的基礎”。

成立了一年後，ACEA已收集了大量有關教育、生物倫理、生態學及最重要的是有關家庭的資料。同時，Rede Vida電視台認為，它的一個電視節目“Tribuna Independiente”會對此等資料感興趣。這是一個逢星期五全國廣播的黃昏節目。

“Tribuna Independiente”邀請不同領域的專家聚首一堂舉行圓桌會議，發表他們的專業意見。在這互動的節目中，觀眾會以電郵發問，如果時間許可，專家會在節目中解答，還未答覆的問題會留待節目完結後跟進。

徇眾要求，現在“Tribuna Independiente”節目也在星期一播放。除此之外，ACEA會把節目的錄影帶寄給有興趣的人士。索取者很多是來自學校、圖書館和大學。巴西利亞市Galois學校的校長曾被邀請在節目中講論有關在教育孩子中家長及學校擔當的角色。事後，校長印製了相關的錄影帶發送給在該校就讀學生的3,000個家庭。

“Tribuna Independiente”節目影響深遠，其中一個例子是有一位15歲的少女，她觀看完其中一集由蘇里教授(Professor Sueli Caramello Uliano)在節目中講論墮胎問題之後，發電郵給他，之後與他繼續通訊；結果這位年輕的少女改變了她原本想去墮胎的決定。

為了最近胚胎幹細胞研究有待立法的問題，國家司法部長特地收看“Tribuna Independiente”有關這問題的片段。兩天後，他在全國最大的報章宣布：「我看過Rede Vida電視台關於這問題的採訪，印象非常深刻，對專家的言論多番思考。事實顯示，為了要救一個人的性命，竟要除掉另一人的性命。」

Benedict XVI's words for young people

How can we develop a friendship with Christ? What brings joy to daily life?
What do we need to make courageous decisions?

January 23, 2007

Friends of God

The Apostles were Jesus' travelling companions, Jesus' friends. Their journey with Jesus was not only a physical journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, but an interior journey during which they learned faith in Jesus Christ, not without difficulty, for they were people like us.



"The Apostles learned faith in Jesus Christ, not without difficulty, for they were people like us."

But for this very reason, because they were Jesus' travelling companions, Jesus' friends, who learned faith on a journey that was far from easy, they are also guides for us, who help us to know Jesus Christ, to love him and to have faith in him. (*General Audience, August 9, 2006*).

Closeness to Jesus

We can imagine that Philip is also addressing us with those two verbs that imply personal involvement. He is also saying to us what he said to Nathanael: "Come and see." The Apostle engages us to become closely acquainted with Jesus.

In fact, friendship, true knowledge of the other person, needs closeness and indeed, to a certain extent, lives on it. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that according to what Mark writes, Jesus chose the Twelve primarily "to be with him" (Mk 3: 14); that is, to share in his life and learn directly from him not only the style of his behaviour, but above all who he really was.

Indeed, only in this way, taking part in his life, could they get to know him and subsequently, proclaim him.

Later, in Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, one would read that what is important is to "learn Christ" (4: 20): therefore, not only and not so much to listen to his teachings

and words as rather to know him in person, that is, his humanity and his divinity, his mystery and his beauty. In fact, he is not only a Teacher but a Friend, indeed, a Brother.

How will we be able to get to know him properly by being distant? Closeness, familiarity and habit make us discover the true identity of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Philip reminds us precisely of this. And thus he invites us to "come" and "see", that is, to enter into contact by listening, responding and communion of life with Jesus, day by day. (*General Audience, September 6, 2006*).



"Closeness, familiarity and habit make us discover the true identity of Jesus Christ." (Photo: carf)

Young people and commitment

Holy Father, you were in Cologne with the young people exactly a year ago. You experienced how amazingly willing youth are to welcome others and you personally were very warmly welcomed. Will you be bringing a special message for young people on this next Trip?

First of all, I would say that I am very happy there are young people who want to be together, who want to be together in faith and who want to do something good. The tendency to do good is very strong in young people; just think of the many kinds of volunteer work they do.



"Definitive decisions: they are really the only ones that allow us to grow, to move ahead and to reach something great in life."

The commitment of offering your own personal contribution to help the needy of this world is a great thing. One idea might be to encourage them in this sphere: Go ahead! Look for opportunities to do good! The world needs this desire to do good, it needs this commitment!

Then, another message might be this: the courage to make definitive decisions! Young people are very generous, but when they face the risk of a lifelong commitment, be it marriage or a priestly vocation, they are afraid.

The world is moving dramatically: nowadays I can continually do whatever I want with my life with all

its unpredictable future events. By making a definitive decision, am I not myself tying up my personal freedom and depriving myself of freedom of movement?

Reawaken the courage to make definitive decisions: they are really the only ones that allow us to grow, to move ahead and to reach something great in life. They are the only decisions that do not destroy our freedom but offer to point us in the right direction. Risk making this leap, so to speak, towards the definitive and so embrace life fully: this is something I would be happy to communicate to them. (*Interview, August 5, 2006*).

Education: the courage to make definitive decisions

A true education must awaken the courage to make definitive decisions, which today are considered a mortifying bind to our freedom. In reality, they are indispensable for growth and in order to achieve something great in life, in particular, to cause love to mature in all its beauty: therefore, to give consistency and meaning to freedom itself.

From this solicitude for the human person and his formation comes our "no" to weak and deviant forms of love and to the counterfeiting of freedom, seen also in the reduction of reason to only what is calculable or manipulatable. In truth, these "nos" are rather "yeses" to authentic love, to the reality of man as he has been created by God. (*Address, October 19, 2006*).

The beauty of sanctity, and the rich young man

Four new Saints are proposed today for the veneration of the universal Church: *Rafael Guízar y Valencia, Filippo Smaldone, Rose Venerini and Théodore Guérin*. Their names will be remembered for ever.

In contrast to this immediately comes the thought of the "rich young man" of whom the Gospel, just proclaimed, speaks. This youth has remained anonymous; if he had responded positively to the invitation of Jesus, he would have become his disciple and probably the Evangelist would have recorded his name.

From this fact one can immediately glimpse the theme of this Sunday's Liturgy of the Word: if man puts his trust in the riches of this world, he will not reach the full sense of life and of true joy. If instead, trusting the Word of God, he renounces himself and



"The Saint is exactly that man, that woman, who, responding with joy and generosity to Christ's call, leaves everything to follow him." (Photo: carf).

his goods for the Kingdom of Heaven, apparently losing much, he in reality gains all.

The Saint is exactly that man, that woman, who, responding with joy and generosity to Christ's call, leaves everything to follow him. Like Peter and the other Apostles, as St Teresa of Jesus today reminds us as well as countless other friends of God, the new Saints have also run this demanding yet fulfilling Gospel itinerary and have already received "a hundred fold" in this life, together with trials and persecutions, and then eternal life. (*Homily, October 15, 2006*).

The joy of those who trust in God

But how can we become holy, friends of God?

We can first give a negative answer to this question: to be a Saint requires neither extraordinary actions or works nor the possession of exceptional charisms. Then comes the positive reply: it is necessary first of all to listen to Jesus and then to follow him without losing heart when faced by difficulties. "If anyone serves me", he warns us, "he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also; if any one serves me, the Father will honour him" (Jn 12: 26).

Like the grain of wheat buried in the earth, those who trust him and love him sincerely accept dying to themselves. Indeed, he knows that whoever seeks to keep his life for himself loses it, and whoever gives himself, loses himself, and in this very way finds life (cf. Jn 12: 24-25).

The Church's experience shows that every form of holiness, even if it follows different paths, always passes through the Way of the Cross, the way of self-denial.

The Saints' biographies describe men and women who, docile to the divine plan, sometimes faced unspeakable trials and suffering, persecution and martyrdom. They persevered in their commitment: "they... have come out of the great tribulation", one reads in Revelation, "they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rv 7: 14). Their names are written in the book of life (cf. Rv 20: 12) and Heaven is their eternal dwelling-place.

The example of the Saints encourages us to follow in their same footsteps and to experience the joy of those who trust in God, for the one true cause of sorrow and



"It is necessary first of all to listen to Jesus." (Photo: alexkon).

unhappiness for men and women is to live far from him.

Holiness demands a constant effort, but it is possible for everyone because, rather than a human effort, it is first and foremost a gift of God, thrice Holy (cf. Is 6: 3). In the second reading, the Apostle John remarks: "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1 Jn 3: 1).

It is God, therefore, who loved us first and made us his adoptive sons in Jesus. Everything in our lives is a gift of his love: how can we be indifferent before such a great mystery? How can we not respond to the Heavenly Father's love by living as grateful children? In Christ, he gave us the gift of his entire self and calls us to a personal and profound relationship with him.



"In Christ, he gave us the gift of his entire self and calls us to a personal and profound relationship with him."

Consequently, the more we imitate Jesus and remain united to him the more we enter into the mystery of his divine holiness. We discover that he loves us infinitely, and this prompts us in turn to love our brethren. Loving always entails an act of self-denial, "losing ourselves", and it is precisely this that makes us happy. (*Homily, November 1, 2006*).

The young

The young want to see if God exists and what God tells us. Consequently, there is a certain willingness, in spite of all the difficulties of our time. An enthusiasm also exists. Therefore, we must do all we can to try to keep alive this flame that shows itself on occasions such as the World Youth Days.

What shall we do? This is our common question.... It seems to me that under the Bishop's coordination, a way should be found, on the one hand, to integrate young people into the parish so that they may be the leaven of parish life; and on the other, also to obtain for these youth the help of extra-parochial



"The young want to see if God exists and what God tells us."

personnel. These two things must go hand-in-hand.

It is necessary to suggest to young people that not only in the parish but also in various contexts they must integrate themselves into the life of the dioceses so as to meet subsequently in the parish; so it is necessary to encourage all initiatives along these lines.

I think that volunteer experience is very important nowadays. It is vital not to leave young people to the mercy of discos but to have useful tasks for them to do in which they see they are necessary, realize that they can do something good.

By feeling this impulse to do something useful for humanity, for someone, for a group, young people also become aware of this incentive to strive to find the "track" of a positive commitment, of a Christian ethic.

It seems to me very important that young people truly find tasks that demonstrate that they are needed, that guide them on the way of a positive service of assistance inspired by Christ's love for men and women, so that they themselves seek the sources from which to draw strength and commitment. (*Address, August 31, 2006*).

Humor

What role does humor play in the life of a Pope?

I am not a man who constantly thinks up jokes. But I think it is very important to be able to see the humorous side of life and its joyful dimension and not to take everything too tragically.

I would also say it is necessary for my ministry. A writer once said that angels can fly because they do not take themselves too seriously. Maybe we could also fly a bit if we did not think we were so important. (*Interview, August 5, 2006*).

Jesus of Nazareth, the Pope's path towards Jesus

"Jesus of Nazareth," a book written by Benedict XVI is on sale in Italian, German, and Polish bookshops starting April 16, which is also the Pope's 80th birthday. The volume, 448 pages long, is to be translated into 20 languages. The English publication date was May 7.

2007/04/15

The Italian publishing house, Rizzoli, entrusted by the Vatican Publishing House with the sale of the rights of the book throughout the world, today released a press communique stating that " 'Jesus of Nazareth' is the first part of a two-volume work examining Jesus' public life from His Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration."

"On the one hand," the communique continues, "this is a pastoral narrative ... offering an introduction to the principles of Christianity. ... On the other, the text is an essay that maintains the strict academic discipline that distinguish the writings and talks of the theologian Joseph Ratzinger."



"The pastoral concerns of the Pope," it adds, "and his exceptional theological doctrine, come together to focus on the central theme of the work: the conviction that, in order to understand the figure of Jesus Christ, it is necessary to start from His union with the Father."

"A historical-critical methodology is indispensable for serious exegesis." Such a methodology "has granted access to a great quantity of material and knowledge that enable us to reconstruct the figure of Jesus with a profundity unimaginable a few decades ago."

Nonetheless, only faith can lead to the understanding that Jesus is God; and if in the light of this conviction the sacred texts are read with the instruments of modern historical-critical methodology, ... they reveal ... a figure worthy of faith.

"For Joseph Ratzinger, faith and critical research are complementary, not antagonistic, and the Jesus of the Gospels is the historical Jesus," the communique concludes.

A synopsis of the new volume, entitled "the Pope's path towards Jesus," makes it clear that this book "reflects the personal search by Joseph Ratzinger for the 'face of Jesus,' and is not a document of the Magisterium."

"For Benedict XVI, the biblical text contains all the elements to affirm that the historical figure of Jesus Christ is also in fact the Son of God, Who came to earth to save humankind."

"For Joseph Ratzinger, faith and critical research are complementary, not antagonistic, and the Jesus of the Gospels is the historical Jesus".

"Based on the intimate unity between the Old and New Testament, and employing Christological hermeneutics which see in Jesus Christ to the key to the entire Bible, Joseph Ratzinger presents the Jesus of the Gospels as the 'new Moses' Who fulfills the ancient expectations of Israel."

This new and true Moses must lead the people of God to real and definitive freedom. He does so through successive steps which, nonetheless, always allow God's plan to be seen in its entirety."

In this light, "the immersion of Jesus in the waters of the Jordan is the symbol of His death and descent into hell, a reality that accompanied Him throughout His life."

In order to save humanity, ... He had to overcome the principal temptations that in different forms threaten mankind of all times and, transforming them into obedience, reopen the way towards God, towards the Promised Land which is the Kingdom of God."

"The theme of the 'Kingdom of God' which runs throughout Jesus' announcement is given deeper consideration in the Pope's reflection on the Sermon on the Mount, ... in which the Beatitudes constitute the main points of the new Law and, at the same time, represent a self-portrait of Jesus."

The Sermon "shows that this Law is not just, as in Moses' case, the result of a 'face to face' meeting with God, but carries in itself the fullness that arises from Jesus' intimate union with the Father."

Hence, a "fundamental element" of man's life is "talking and listening to God. And for this reason Benedict XVI has dedicated an entire chapter to prayer, explaining the Our Father that Jesus Himself taught us."

The synopsis continues: "The profound contact of men and women with God the Father through Jesus in the Holy Spirit brings them together in the 'us' of a new family which, with the choosing of the Twelve, recalls the origins of Israel. ...

Even in its highly varied composition, the new family of Jesus, the Church of all times, finds in Him the unifying center and the guidance to live the universal nature of His Gospel. "In order to make the content of His message more accessible and to turn it into a form of practical guidance, Jesus used parables...

However, there is also a purely theological explanation of the meaning of the parables, and Joseph Ratzinger highlights this in a singularly profound analysis." The Holy Father's book then goes on to consider "the metaphors used by Jesus to explain His mystery."

"The profound contact of men and women with God the Father through Jesus in the Holy Spirit brings them together in the 'us' of a new family". These are "the great images of St. John," but "before analyzing them the Pope presents a very interesting summary of the various results of academic research into who John the Evangelist was," and "opens new horizons for readers, revealing Jesus ever more clearly as the 'Word of God'."

"This point of view is broadened further in the last two chapters of the book ... where the true mission of the Messiah of God and the destiny of those who follow Him is definitively established."

Finally "an in-depth analysis of the titles which, according to the Gospels, Jesus used for Himself, concludes the Pontiff's book." "Alongside the man of faith, ... alongside the highly sophisticated theologian, ... what also emerges from this book is the pastor who truly manages to 'encourage in readers the growth of a living relationship' with Jesus Christ. ...

In this light," the synopsis concludes, "the Pontiff is not afraid to tell the world that, by excluding God and clinging only to visible and material reality, we risk self destruction in the selfish search for a purely material wellbeing," while renouncing the possibility "of achieving true freedom in the 'Promised Land,' the 'Kingdom of God'."

Favors granted through the intercession of St. Josemaria Escrivá

A small miracle

Thanks for a 'small' miracle... I have a wonderful son, who is a lively and articulate 3 year old, but he is rather assertive in his tastes. He has had almost phobic aversion to most foods since weaning, surviving mainly on sausages and chicken nuggets for long periods and generally refusing to even try anything new. I was constantly having to make special arrangements around his eating preferences and taking him out anywhere posed an ongoing challenge which was often exhausting. He could not eat with his peers and I would have to prepare his own separate food to bring to social gatherings for him. Comparing him to my second son, who had none of these strong preferences, only re-enforced my bewilderment.

My friend could see that this was becoming a major worry for me and would distract my thoughts in my prayer and even during a retreat. She suggested that we do a nine day novena to St. Josemaria, using the prayer card. Even from the first day I saw the difference when he amazed us by asking for a piece of the salmon we were having for dinner. The day after, at a friend's house, he requested for the first time to try a boiled egg! He kept this up until he was eating sandwiches, rice dishes and even cheese (previously totally embargoed in any shape or form since he tried a baby jar of cheese soufflé at 8 months.). By the end of the novena I considered him cured and he is now eating a normal diet, like any other child. Although the scale of this event may seem small in comparison to others I wish to assert that it is a true miracle! Thank you St. Josemaria!

M. D., UK

April 29, 2007

A small but important favor

I promised I would write about this small favor which, although it is so small, is nevertheless very important to me. I had to give a speech to 400 people. It was the first time I had spoken to such a large audience. When I practiced, there came a point where my voice failed and I started to cry. I did this dozens of times, I'm not exaggerating. I said to St Josemaría, "You were overcome

with emotion in the presence of his holiness Pope Paul VI – do me this great favor, don't let me be overcome and don't let my voice give way during my speech." Some hours before the occasion I had another practice, and for the first time my voice didn't give way.

I knew that the Founder of Opus Dei had heard my prayers, and I went along confidently to the conference. I thought that it was proof that he had already granted the favor. And so it was. Additionally, I told him, "I will publish it, although I find it hard, because I don't like talking about such personal things." I was congratulated by people who are very hard to please and who never go overboard about these things. I want to show my gratitude so that more people are encouraged to have recourse to the intercession of St. Josemaría, Founder of Opus Dei, in everyday things.

C. S., Spain
April 28, 2007

I got the tickets

For a long time past I have been meaning to write about two favors St Josemaría did for me on different trips. The first was to get me two tickets on the very day of the trip, only just before leaving. This was amazing, given that the August vacations began on that day and I was traveling to the south of Spain, which is a notable tourist destination. I prayed hard to St Josemaría, the founder of Opus Dei, all the way to the station. I had to be very persistent at the booking-office, but in the end I was able to travel that day, impossible though it seemed.

The other favor I promised to write about was for a trip I made to my home town. My dad had been in hospital for several weeks and I went to visit him. I went by airplane. As it is a long distance and there are no direct flights, you always have to make a transfer. I had a return ticket for fixed flights, tourist class. While I was there the hospital confirmed the date of an operation on the very day I was due to travel back. I stayed to see him safely through the operation, so I lost my flight. I prayed to St Josemaría that I'd be able to travel the next day.

At the first airport, thanks to the help of someone I knew, there was no problem, but the second flight was more complicated. I had the medical report as evidence, and after a lot of to-ing and fro-ing, and, of course, praying to St

Josemaría, they let me on the flight. It really was a big favor because one of the conditions of that type of ticket is that you can't change the flight, and obviously still less after the date when it should have been used.

E. N. V., Spain
April 2007

As arranged

I am a pilot with a German airways company. I was living in Frankfurt and I asked to be transferred to Düsseldorf, because I'd found a house in that city for my family – my wife and the baby we were expecting. Everything seemed to be going well and we were already getting the new house set up when, because of staff shortages, they canceled the transfer. I talked to the manager and another person, but nobody understood my problem or was interested in my situation. Even the union didn't want to help. The only solution left was to turn to St Josemaría and entrust the solution to him. And suddenly, everyone started trying to help, they found a solution to the problem, and I was able to move as arranged.

J. R., Germany
April 10, 2007

From Cuba

I live in Cuba, and through a friend I received a copy of *The Way* by Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei. I began to read it and meditate about it little by little, and my life has changed. My faith has become more committed, and now I know that God is our good Father and that I've a great patron in heaven called St Josemaría. Every day I practice the "heroic minute" of getting up right away in the morning, or at any rate I try to. I am more organized, and my life of faith has received a new direction. Everyone who can should read this great book. It will help you so much in your life. Now I take it with me wherever I go. Thank you.

Lester, Cuba
March 29, 2007

She came out of the coma

Two years ago my daughter Roxana, 31, was in coma in a hospital in Chiclaya. We had very little hope that she would recover. After a fortnight, one morning I went to seven o'clock Mass in the Cathedral. I was standing near the entrance, when I got the feeling someone on my left was looking at me. I didn't turn round because I was trying to follow the Mass, but suddenly I couldn't help glancing that way. I saw a big photo of Saint Josemaría Escrivá. I told him that when I had finished praying to our Father God, I would go and pray for his intercession with my wife, who had lost faith that our daughter would recover. So I said to her, "Let's ask this saint to intercede before God for our daughter," and we did.

That afternoon I went to the hospital. My wife couldn't even bring herself to ask for news, but, thank God, my daughter had improved. The next day I went round the whole town looking for a prayer-card or photo of the founder of Opus Dei but I couldn't find one. To my great surprise, when I went to visit my daughter that afternoon, she already had her eyes open when I came in. Beside her, on the glass panel, someone had stuck a prayer-card of Saint Josemaría. I hadn't seen it before and I don't know who put it there. Now he is my patron, my guide and support in everything. Thank you, Saint Josemaría.

J. A. S., Peru
March 28, 2007

Which saint did you pray to?

I was desperate with trying to find a job, this had become a nightmare and I was physically and emotionally exhausted. The reason was "lack of work experience" – I just took my degree at university. I can't believe that having a professional qualification is not enough to get a job. Then one day I heard about Saint Josemaría thru some friends. I found out more about him and then began a novena to him. Unbelievable though it seems, even before completing the novena I began to see the first results thru God's infinite mercy. I received some calls, and although they were not for jobs I was interested in, that gave me hope.

After about a month praying the prayer daily and renewing my efforts thru the right channels, I got my longed-for post. I thank God, my Guardian Angel and of course Saint Josemaría, Founder of Opus Dei. I am now working for a company that is wonderful in every way. Recently talking to a friend she

was astonished to hear the details of my job and asked, "Hey, which saint did you pray to?!"

A. V. M., Mexico
March 25, 2007

I have not drunk since that day

As a sixty year old person who had never been honest about his drinking nor his drunkenness, I wanted to change but hardly believed it possible. One day I felt called upon to pray to Josemaría for sobriety – even though I had little or no understanding of what the word meant. Before a week had passed, I was sure the prayer had been answered and so it was through a series of steps that began with a retreat that weekend. By the grace of God fifteen years later, I am a sober person who has not drunk since that day. Sincerely yours,

E. M., USA
December 28, 2005

Guardian Angels

Through Saint Josemaría's teachings I've learned to talk to the Guardian Angels all the time. Especially when I'm driving, I ask them to help me drive well, find a parking-space nearby, arrive on time after long journeys, etc. The day before yesterday I forgot to lock the car because I got distracted trying to adjust the rear view mirror, and when I was praying to my Guardian Angel, and had already walked 20 steps away from the car – in a rather dangerous area – I turned round like I was being pulled on a string, went back to the car and locked it.

Thank you Saint Josemaría for teaching me to talk with the Guardian Angels, and may they and you keep on caring for my children, my husband and me.

Rocío, Spain
October 27, 2005

From Tunisia

A letter from Tunisia where a Mass was celebrated for the feast of Saint Josemaría on June 26, 2005.

Dear friends,

The Lord hears our prayers. The Mass we organized on June 26 was a success. Saint Josemaría was the Saint of the day in our church on that June 26.

In the Mass, in his homily and the Bidding Prayers, Father Moises Koumakpai told us about "this new Saint of the Catholic Church", highlighting the main features of his spirit i.e. spreading the universal call to holiness to all the baptized. Father Koumakpai also asked us to pray for Opus Dei and all its faithful.

After Mass the congregation was invited to look at an exhibition, and people were giving out pictures of Saint Josemaría and leaflets about the Work and its founder. The parishioners were delighted with the exhibition and what it taught them about the Opus Dei prelature.

*Many thanks for all your encouragement and prayers.
United in prayer,
M. G., Tunis*

My Disbelief Has Turned Into Deep Seated Commitment

When she first heard the message of Opus Dei, she thought it an unattainable ideal. Today Ivy Phua is a member, and she says, "My disbelief has turned into a deep seated commitment that is still growing everyday."

2007/05/28

"To be a saint and to sanctify work in the middle of the world" – I gasped in awe when I first heard this at Opus Dei. I had always been a good, practicing Catholic but this seemed an unattainably lofty idea.

That thought has since changed as I journeyed with the friends met in the Work. The experience is indeed beautiful with the numerous doctrine classes and retreats that I attended. With each class, I know more about the Catholic faith and with each retreat, I love God more deeply!

Without a doubt, my disbelief has turned into a deep seated commitment that is still growing everyday. With faith, I am able to keep presence of God every waking moment.

Work takes up like eight or sometimes twelve hours of my day. In the past, I couldn't imagine how God could fit into that schedule of mine: He was present in my life only at bedtime or when I had the time.

But slowly and surely through prayer, keeping the presence of God during the day has become a reality. I began an arduous journey and remember the numerous occasions where I failed or forgot to give Him my time.

My friend in the Work, who is also a confidant, keeps telling me that prayer life is a gradual slope that one should try to ascend, not immediately, but ultimately. I am motivated even to this day!

Opus Dei has helped me be holy and purposeful. I have never felt closer to God even in my moments of difficulty. With God in my life, I have the strength and courage to face up to the challenges at work and in my life.



25 years at the Crossroads of the Orient

"It is logical that we desire to spread this human and supernatural joy to everyone in China, in Asia and to the other continents. In order to do so, pray a lot for them."

2007/05/01

Twenty-five years ago in Hong Kong, the first Holy Mass was celebrated in the first centre of the women on 1st May 1982. Since that day, our Lord's presence in the tabernacle of that centre has been a boost for the apostolic activity in the city.



Regular trips to Hong Kong were already being made from Manila some years prior; and in 1981, they began looking for a place that could be the first centre of the women in the city. On 10th December, feast day of our Lady of Loreto, a suitable apartment on Hong Kong Island was finally secured, thanks also to the heavenly intercession of our Founder, St. Josemaría Escrivá. The following year, three women members of Opus Dei moved to Hong Kong on 1st March to begin the first centre of the Work. Two months later, the oratory was ready for the first celebration of the Mass and for the reservation of our Lord in the tabernacle.



Msgr. Alvaro del Portillo, Prelate of Opus Dei and successor of St. Josemaría, was following all the developments with fatherly interest and with his prayers. Towards the end of February 1982, he wrote to his daughters who were busy with the preparations to move to Hong Kong, encouraging them, "You have everything well prepared, with all the prayers and mortification offered by your sisters and brothers the world over, especially in this

last year... Besides, you can count on the powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary who will watch over you and help you, now and later, at every moment. Do not forget, my daughters, that a tender and filial devotion to the Mother of God is the best foundation for our spiritual life and for all we do. (...)"

In the new centre, some spiritual activities could be offered for friends and those keen to grow in their faith and spiritual life; and so it continues till today. At present, there are 3 centres of Opus Dei which offer activities for women, one on Hong Kong Island and 2 in the Kowloon peninsula. There are a similar number of centres with activities for men.



In 1996, Bishop Javier Echevarría, who succeeded Bishop Alvaro as Prelate of Opus Dei, visited Hong Kong and Macau from 15th to 18th April. On 16th April, he celebrated Mass for his daughters in the oratory of that first centre. During the thanksgiving after Mass, he prayed at the foot of the altar, before the tabernacle and the altarpiece, which was an Oriental painting of Holy Mary, Queen of China, with the Child Jesus standing on her lap.



In a general get-together that same afternoon with several hundred people who have come from all over Hong Kong—truly, a crossroads of the Orient and threshold of China—he said, "It is logical that we desire to spread this human and supernatural joy to everyone in China, in Asia and to the other continents. In order to do so, pray a lot for them. Love them;

offer up your work for them, your difficulties, those that crop up everyday. With all this, you are preparing the ground for them to be closer to God."

“Pray that we may be the priests that Christ desires”

Thirty-eight faithful of Opus Dei were ordained priests on May 26. This article offers some testimonies from some of them.

2007/05/28

One of the 38 faithful of Opus Dei to be ordained is North American, **Justin Gillespie**, who stands at nearly 2 m tall with a bird's-eye view of the world. He will be ordained by Mons. Javier Echevarría on May 26 in Rome.

Justin began living the spirit of Opus Dei “little by little, and during that period, discovered a peace and happiness that he had not previously felt”. The future Fr. Justin added that the call presented a path and new horizons that were not always easy, “The Christian calling is not like receiving an email or a phone call from God telling you: ‘Hey, Justin, I’ve got a plan for you!’ It is a process that requires “much prayer and, occasionally, time”.



Justin Gillespie, from the US (Photos: JM San Millán).

“THE FIRST MASS: FOR MY FATHER’S SOUL”

The ordination will take place in the Basilica of St. Eugene at 4 p.m. Weeks before, those to be ordained have been preparing themselves spiritually and rehearsing the ceremony. They are also asking for prayers to be faithful.



Andrés Felipe Suárez, from Colombia.

Their parents and friends will come to Rome from the five continents, though not everyone will be able to come. “My father was called Emilio and he passed away when I was 13,” recalls **Andrés Felipe Suárez**. “He loved to talk about interesting topics. He was baptized as an infant and had affection for the Blessed Virgin, though he shunned any public manifestation of religion. I am grateful to him and have fond memories and admiration for him. I would like to be able to celebrate my first Mass in Medellín for the repose of his soul.”

“SAUDADE DO MEU RIO DE JANEIRO!”

The future priests come from 17 different countries

Though many have lived some years away from their native land, they carry memories close to their hearts. **Pedro Willemsens** is from Rio de Janeiro, and if you asked him about his city, he would not be able to repress a sigh of “saudade do meu Rio de Janeiro!” (How I long for my Rio de Janeiro!). He commented that the years lived in Europe have made him wish for his native city a “greater beauty, and less poverty and misery which afflicts some of his fellow countrymen.”

The roads that have led each one to Opus Dei, and later to the priesthood, are varied. **Leonardo Bravo**, Mexican, tells how he turned down different invitations to participate in the means of Christian formation at an Opus Dei centre over a period of three years. “There was peer pressure from my ‘bolita’ (group of friends), which meant adherence to an unwritten rule of not stepping into a centre of Opus Dei.”



Pedro Willemsens, Brazilian from Rio.

All the candidates for ordination share in common their affection for Pope Benedict XVI and John Paul II. **Fabrizio Melchiori**, Argentinian, was in St Peter’s Square the night Karol Wojtyła passed away. “I was able to pray before his mortal remains only after queuing for 5 hours. The ambiance was exceptional. There was a group of Muslims in a pose of profound respect nearby; a little further off, there was a lady from Naples who was barely able to stand; and to my right, a young Pole exhausted after hitch-hiking all the way to be able to see his Pope.”

Irishman **Brendan O’Connor** is the oldest amongst them and had met St Josemaria in person, “I had the privilege of being with him a few times in 1973. His infective optimism, and his affectionate and gracious personality made a deep impression on me.”

“MY PARENTS ARE VERY HAPPY”

The Founder of Opus Dei said that we owe 90% of our vocation to our parents. **Ricardo Furber**, Mexican, has felt this since he was young. “I have that clear picture of my parents making the effort to go for daily Mass at 7. They never insisted that I accompanied them, though Sundays were different as they would insist that we all went together. When my father took me to school, we would recite some prayers to our Lady. Before we went to bed, we used to kiss them good-night and they would take that chance to make the sign of the Cross on our foreheads.”

Paolo Arcara, from Como (Italy), comments, "I think my parents are very happy with my decision and, above all, to see me happy. All this makes up for my being far from home, though at times they miss me."

THE COMMITMENT OF THE LAITY



The Dutch Eugén Graas.

As the day of the Ordination draws near, Eugén Graas, from Holland, highlights the fundamental role of the lay faithful in the building up of the Church and in the evangelization of society. "The priest plays a vital role in the life of the Church, which revolves around the Eucharist. But it is the lay faithful who Christianize society from within and they make it more just through the dedication to their family, their upright attitude at work and their commitment to social structures."

Fabio Quartulli is a Parisian. His past alliance with the communist cell group Ho Chi Minh has created a certain celebrity status among his fellow companions who will be ordained. When asked again about what remains of the 'militant communist' in him, he replies, "A great concern for the East European countries, especially for

Russia... and a special affection for the social initiatives promoted by the faithful of Opus Dei throughout the world."

CONGO: SUFFERINGS THAT GNAW AT THE CONSCIENCE

After the ceremony of May 26, the new priests will begin their pastoral work in the five continents. Congolese Freddy Ngandu describes the situation of his country as "a continuous cry of desolation that reverberates in the conscience of every Congolese." He continues, "It is worthwhile to share with them the training and the experience I acquired during my stay in Rome. It is not much, but it is something that can be useful for the country."

A common feeling among the future priests was voiced by Venezuelan **Luis Armando Silva**, "We know that we are sustained by the prayers of many people. We need them in order to respond generously to this great gift. Pray that we may be the priests that Christ desires."



Freddy Ngandu, from Congo.

INCONTRO ROMANO 2007: Live the Family, the art of making a home

280 participants from 10 countries met in Rome to discuss the artistic, cultural and social relevance of the daily work of home making. This is the second of a series of 3 congresses organised under the theme "Live the Family"

2007/04/22

The Congress *Incontro Romano* was recently held in Rome where 280 participants from 10 countries —among them Germany, Brazil, Spain, Italy, France, USA and Hong Kong—, presented their conclusions on the topic "Live the Family: Home Art."



This "encounter" marks a series of congresses from 2006-2008 taking place under the common theme of "Live the Family".

The presentations and talks highlighted the excellence demanded by the daily work of home making, with its artistic and cultural dimension, and its influence in the lives of the persons.

The exchange of professional experience among persons from various backgrounds in each of the sessions of the annual Congress was enriching. Raquel Contador and Susana García from Madrid expounded their ideas in their presentation on "*Home Art: live like an artist*".

"To live with artistic flair in the daily tasks at home," said Raquel, "requires a personal attitude that is worthwhile fostering; learning to be observant without getting tired."

The work of attending to a person directly, like that of home making, day after day, can leave a lasting mark on the persons who are loved, through the care for the material details that make life more pleasant.

"A clean house," they continued, "clothes well taken care of, the changing of a

burnt out bulb, or the care for the dishes served at meals, all silently reflect the amiability and courtesy of the attentive service that is given by someone.”

The second part of the presentation introduced a project of the *Centro de Estudio y Trabajo (CET)*. In this project, those who are at their studies in the university learn to balance it with the professional work of home making, through an integral plan of formation that simultaneously promotes an authentic meaning of the family.

Hot Pot: Good Food, Happy Home was the presentation of Tiffany Kung Wai Yee from Hong Kong. It emphasised the value of the hot pot, a traditional Chinese meal in which the ingredients of the meal are cooked as they dine at the table. The presentation valued a cultural element that makes family life and cooking go hand in hand.

The main presentation was by Claire Mazoyer from the *Institut de Formation à l'Assistance aux Personnes (IFAP)*, France.

“The home,” Professor Mazoyer said, “reveals the tone of the family life of the family that lives in it. At the same time, the material tasks at home -the domestic activities- infuse warmth and life in an otherwise impersonal framework, precisely because they are done by people for other people.”

“Taking care of these material things (order, harmony, cleaning) creates a peaceful, serene, and beautiful environment that helps everyone in the family to rest. The domestic tasks have as an immediate end, the wellbeing of each member of the family. As it is, this work will always be necessary and is a source of dignity and improvement for whoever carries them out.”

• Initiatives

São Paulo -- Television program for the family

Two years ago, a group of professionals organized the Association for Culture and Current Events (ACEA), dedicated to reflection on the ethical and humanistic principles of culture. Its first activity was a cycle of conferences entitled “Values as the Basis for a New Society.”

At the end of its first year, ACEA had gathered extensive material in the area of education, bioethics, ecology and, above all, the family. At the same time, the Rede Vida television channel decided that the material would be of interest for its program *Tribuna Independiente*, which is broadcast throughout the country on Friday evenings.

Tribuna Independiente brings together experts in various fields who participate in round table discussions on subjects of their specialty. On this interactive program, TV viewers send their questions by e-mail, which are answered directly if time permits. The questions that remain unanswered at the end of the program are handled afterwards.

At the request of the public, *Tribuna Independiente* is now broadcast also on Mondays. In addition, the Association sends videos of the programs to anyone interested. Many requests come from schools, libraries and universities. The principal of the Galois School in Brasilia was invited to speak on the respective roles of parents and schools in educating children. Later she decided to make copies of the video for the three thousand families who send children to her school.

An example of the repercussion of *Tribuna Independiente* was the case of a 15-year-old girl who after seeing one of the programs sent an e-mail to Professor Sueli Caramello Uliano, who had spoken about abortion. The correspondence was then continued, with the result that the young girl changed her decision to have an abortion.

The current research on embryonic stem cells, which is the subject of a piece of pending legislation, led the Attorney General of the Republic to watch an episode of *Tribuna Independiente* that considered this question. Two days later he declared in the country's largest newspaper: “I have been greatly impressed by an interview that I saw on Rede Vida with a specialist on this question and am reflecting on his words. The fact is that, in order to save a life, one is doing away with another life.”