

## events

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## 新聞摘要

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由聖若瑟瑪利亞施禮華創辦

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## 新聞摘要

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**司鐸年閉幕禮彌撒**

教宗在司鐸年閉幕禮彌撒中說：天主委托軟弱的人為使人類察覺到他的臨在

2010/06/13

梵蒂岡電臺訊



教宗本篤十六世昨天11日以一  
台隆重的彌撒結束了司鐸年。  
在聖伯多祿廣場上舉行的這台  
彌撒，于昨天上午10點鐘開  
始，在場的司鐸人數超 過了1  
萬5千，他們來自97個不同的  
國家，大家都穿著白色長袍在  
阿爾斯的本堂神父聖維雅內的  
肖像前和教宗一同獻祭，就這  
樣，整個廣場變成了一個大祭

壇。教宗在講道中指出，天主把重任托給軟弱的人，為令人類察覺到他的臨在。

教宗的講道內容豐富又充滿感情，所觸及的都是司鐸聖召的核心，他闡釋了司鐸聖召的神聖根源，但也不隱瞞由于人的軟弱和有限而造成的陰暗面。教宗說：

“天主使用一個可憐人，通過這個人來臨在人類間並為人類的益處行動。天主將自己托付給人，即使他知道我們的軟弱，他仍然認為人能夠代替他行動和臨在。天主的這個勇氣實在偉大，他的這個勇氣隱藏在‘司鐸身份’這個詞內。願天主認為我們有這個能力；願他這樣來召叫人為他服務，並在他們心內與他們結合在一起。”

教宗告訴在場的司鐸們，舉行司鐸年的意義正是為了令大家再次為天主的鄰近而喜樂，也為天主信賴他們的軟弱而感恩，同時再次向青年們說，天主的召叫、為天主服務並與天主一起，是存在的，更好說，天主正等待人回答“是”。

教宗接著指出，司鐸身份再次發出光亮是“仇人”所不願見到的。“仇人”



希望見到司鐸消失，這樣，天主最終也要被推到世界之外。這事的確發生了，就在舉行司鐸年的時候，司鐸的罪過，特別是侵犯兒童的罪暴了光。司鐸的職務不僅沒有為人服務，反而損害了人。教宗說，所發生的這些事應該令大家走向未來時不斷地淨化。他說：“我們也要不斷地請求天主和被涉

入這些事件的人寬恕，我們也願意承諾盡一切可能令這類的侵犯事件永遠不再發生。”

當天是耶穌聖心節，彌撒中選了第23篇聖咏，內容描述牧人如何用牧杖來保護羊群不被野獸吞噬，以及如何依靠短棍來走過崎嶇的道路。教宗解釋說：



“教會也需要使用牧人的手杖，來保護信仰對抗偽造者和令人迷失的指導。使用牧杖可以成為一種愛的服務。今天我們看到，容忍與司鐸生活不相稱的行為舉止，不是愛。同樣，任由人傳播異端，也不是愛。在這同時，牧杖也應該成為牧人的短棍，幫助人走艱險的小徑追隨主。”

教宗從聖咏第23篇也看到了人對天主的喜樂和感恩的回答。他說：

“天主親自照顧我，照顧我們和全人類。我沒有被遺棄，並沒有在宇宙和令人失去方向的社會中迷失。他照顧我。這位天主不是在遙遠處的天主，為了他，我的生命不再有價值。”

教宗指出，世界上其他的宗教認為天主是唯一的，是美善的，但離人類很遠。過去的啟蒙主義認為天主是造物主但後來他不再關心他的受造物和他們的歷史。他們說：“天主不來干預，也不能干預。”教宗這樣說：



“許多人也許更本不願意天主照顧他們。他們不願意天主打擾他們。在天主的關心和愛看作是打擾的地方，那裏的人便處于混亂的狀況。知道有人愛我並照顧我，不僅美好而且令人感到安慰。但更重要的是，那位認識我、愛我並關心我的天主是存在的。”

教宗繼續說，天主那些作為司鐸的人分擔他對人類的關注。他告訴司鐸們，聖經中所說的認識的意思，不僅是對人外表的認識，而是在內心中與他接近，愛他。教宗說：“我們要努力從天主方面也因為天主來認識人們，我們要努力和他們一起走在與天主建立友誼的路上。”

每一個人在生命中難免會走過誘惑、沮喪、考驗的幽谷，教宗說，即使在這樣的幽谷中，天主也與我們同在。教宗祈求天主助佑司鐸們，使他們能夠在黑暗的夜裏陪伴在托付給他們的人們身邊，使他們能夠向人們展示天主的光。

彌撒結束時，教宗誦念了奉獻于聖母無玷聖心禱文，並請在場的1萬5千位司鐸和全球40萬司鐸忠于司鐸誓願，加倍努力在神聖的司鐸職務中走成聖的道路。



## 把天主帶得更近

慶祝本篤十六世當選教宗五週年紀念

2010/04/18

主業會監督蔡浩偉主教

五年前的今天，若瑟拉辛格樞機主教被選為聖伯多祿的繼承人，天主教會的元首。教宗若望保祿二世於2005年4月2日與世長辭，電視給予空前的實況報導。對前教宗熱情洋溢的鏡頭，在羅馬的大街小巷也處處可見。於2005年4月19日，在聖伯多祿大殿中央的涼台上，我們第一次瞻仰了新教宗和藹可親的儀容。



在感激本篤十六世的諸多動機之中，我想要強調的一點是他不遺餘力的去使「近似我們的天主」為人知悉。這個稱呼取自拉辛格樞機寫的與聖體聖事相關的書名，也是對造物主一種溫情的稱呼。信仰啟示我們：祂深愛我們，親近我們，亦關心祂受造物的生活，正如我們這世代的一位聖人所肯定的。的確，聖施禮華時常覺悟到在每天的忙碌喧囂之中，有時「我們生活得好像天主在星光閃爍的遙遠天庭，而忘記了祂是經常在我們身邊。祂是一位慈愛的父親。祂愛我們每一個人，比世界上所有的母親能愛她們的子女還要多，祂幫助我們，啟發我們，祝福我們…並且，寬恕我們。」（《道路》267）

天主不受時間的拘束，卻藉由耶穌基督進入時間，而將祂自己託付給人類。一如教宗經常提醒我們的，天主已成為人，所以我們可以更輕易的接納祂、熱愛祂。這幾年來，教宗以直截了當的方式，孜孜不倦地展現天主是愛，而成為一個基督徒，不是由於一種道德倫理的選擇，或是崇高的理想，而是遇到一位——納匝肋的耶穌，祂打開我們生命的嶄新視野。（參閱《天主是愛》1）在一個天主似乎缺席或距離遙遠、不關懷人類的世界裡，教宗的教理教導將天主帶回我們的日常生活，帶回二十一世紀男男女女的生命之旅中。

基督徒的使徒工作正是在於幫助人們在他們平凡的存活中去認識耶穌基

督，所以他們時時刻刻能找到天主，與祂交談——不只是在痛苦的情況之下——將充滿意義的「祂」和「我」結合在一起。對天主教徒而言，一個「祂」，在教會生活泉源的感恩聖事中達到顛峰。

對於任何一個努力奮鬥去「活出」彌撒聖祭的人而言，任何崇高的人性活動——就某種說法——都可獲致禮儀性的層面，正因為它結合基督的犧牲。換言之，佔據一個百姓大半天時間的家庭、職業和社會責任不會把他由我主那裡拿走。相反，由於那些活動所引發的事故、人際關係和問題，都能滋養他的祈禱。當他們依賴聖寵時，人力所承擔的弱點、挫折、疲憊使得我們更務實、更謙讓、更諒解他人、更視人為弟兄。一個與天主步調同行的人，任何可能的成功和喜樂，都是感恩的機會，並記得我們隨時都在聽祂對我們弟兄的吩咐。要活出與天主的這份友情，本篤十六世在他最近的通諭中提醒我們，要把「鐵石的心」變成「血肉的心」（則36：26）「使人世的生活也更具有『神的氛圍』，更值得人去生活。」（參閱《在真理中實踐愛德》79）



耶穌走在巴勒斯坦的路上，立刻察覺到祂同時代人的憂慮。為此，當一個人知道、愛慕「近似我們的天主」，基督徒不會漠不關心他人的命運。這就是愛德的「良性循環」：我們親近天主亦滋養人與人之間的親切，「人對天主開放也就會對兄弟們開放，生命就成了團結互助和高興的使命。」（《在真理中實踐愛德》78）

相反，拒絕天主、漠不關心造物主，遲早會使人忽視人的價值，繼而喪失它的根基。「知道天主永恆的愛著我們，能支持我們繼續獻身於公義。民族發展這一任務，雖是艱辛的，也常使我們興奮，有時成功有時失敗，把人間生活的關係推向正確的方向。天主的愛叫我們克服局限，超越暫世，給我們勇氣努力追求眾人的福利。」（同上）

本篤十六世身為普世教會的元首，他如何孕育出自己的使命？在他當選後的首台彌撒中，他提及牧者的職責看似繁重，但事實上，它昇華為「美麗

奇妙的，因為它是項真正喜悅的服務，天主的喜悅渴望『闖進』世界。」同時，他也肯定：「沒有比從福音中帶給我們的驚訝、與基督偶遇更美好的了。沒有比認識祂、跟別人講我們和祂的友情更美好的了。」（2005年4月24日講道）教宗就是這樣看自己的使命。傳遞來自於天主的喜樂，在世界上激勵起一股新的動力：人會回應天主愛的承諾。

在這五年的任期內，教宗承受了一些下定決心要驅逐天主於人類社會的人煽動起的攻擊，他同樣地因為一些受召成為「地上的鹽」和「世上的光」（瑪5：14-16）的人的罪行和言行不一致而痛心疾首。我們不該為這些事情驚慌，因為艱難困苦原本就是基督徒常規旅程的一部份。門徒不會大過師傅的。「如果人們迫害了我，也要迫害你們。」（若15：20）同時，也不忘我主所說的：「如果他們遵守了我的話，也要遵守你們的。」（同上）

基督徒不可毀滅的樂觀即扎根於此，受到永不捨棄教會的聖神的滋養。歷史教訓我們，在過去的二十世紀中，多少來勢不善的預言基督的教會將會終止！儘管如此，依賴護慰者的推動，一旦她克服了考驗，她顯得更年輕美貌，以更大的活力帶領眾人走上救贖的途徑。

這幾年來我們也看到教宗道德和智慧的權威，他親近關心那些受苦的人，總是本著愛心堅定的護衛真理與美善，因而鞏固了各種信仰的男女。羅馬教宗繼續做為一個燈塔，照明指出世間變化無常的錯綜複雜。

盡我天主的職責之際，我接觸到許多善意的人們——天主教徒、非教徒，及許多非基督徒——他們告訴我，當教宗本篤十六世面對人類種種的戲劇性事件所表現出的堅定不移和充滿希望，鞏固了他們對福音的信心，或帶領他們更接近教會，尤其，更新了他們想接近教宗宣稱「近似我們的天主」的興趣。我們很多人每天都因著本篤十六世這個喜樂的宣稱而感到富足：因他信仰的光明更有力道；他睿智聰慧的詮釋；加上他清楚的語言；以及他與耶穌基督個人關係的見證。為了整個人類的益處，讓我們祈求我主賜他高壽長久領導我們的教會。

## 第一版越南文的玫瑰經出版了

聖施禮華寫的玫瑰經奧蹟的短評，已翻譯為越南文，於2010年6月在胡志明市發行。

2010/08/02

今年正逢主業會女分會慶祝八十週年創會紀念日。第一版越南文的玫瑰經於2010年6月在越南胡志明市發行。

本書蒐集了玫瑰經歡喜、痛苦與榮福共十五端的短評。1934年以西班牙文問世，書名Santo Rosario。聖施禮華於1931年的一個早晨，在馬德里市聖依莎伯爾奧思汀修院為修女們做完彌撒之後，他在謝聖體時一氣呵成的，短評中流露出他對基督生活恆常的默觀，以及對童貞聖母赤子般的虔敬。



在序言中，他寫道：「路的終點，始於起步。你會發現自己被耶穌的聖愛徹底感化；其實這正是對聖母瑪利亞的信賴之愛。」

在玫瑰經中的這些短評，目的在幫助讀者更深入我主和祂母親的生活，引領我們與聖母有段信賴的談話，她會帶我們去至聖聖三。

聖施禮華從他自己的經驗，勸導我們：「你在念每端的天主經和聖母經以前，要靜默幾秒鐘（三四秒鐘），默想每端的奧義。如果你這麼做，一定能有助於你收斂心神而增加你祈禱的效果。」



玫瑰經寫於1931年，自然沒有提及光明五端，那是2003年由前教宗若望保祿二世為彰顯玫瑰經內容的基督性而加增的。然而，聖施禮華時常默觀並宣講這新奧蹟的景況，為幫助讀者默想完整的玫瑰經，在所有新版的玫瑰經裡，都包括了摘自他著作中與光明五端相關的片段。

玫瑰經目前已被譯成25種語言，售出逾七十萬本。本書第一版是Barnaba Nguyen Van Phuong蒙席翻譯，由胡志明市和平之母書店及朋友們的合作而得以出版。

「今天和往日一樣，玫瑰經一定是件有力的武器，能使我們在內心奮鬥中打勝仗，也幫助其他的靈魂。用你的口舌讚揚聖瑪利亞；從你口中天主要求你做補贖、讚頌。藉著這對聖母美麗的敬禮，和你愛的關注，但願你常渴望知道如何在世上散播和平與幸福。」（聖施禮華）

## 喜樂的教師

專訪蘇利亞神父約聖施禮華

2010/06/21

蘇利亞神父在1953年遇見聖施禮華，當時他是一位醫生。他在1956年晉鐸成為神父，從此至1975年聖施禮華的逝世，蘇神父在羅馬一直留在他身邊工作。現在蘇利亞神父在加拿大服務。

「你說，聖施禮華的個性裡其中的特點是“喜樂”，在你的那本書“Teacher of cheerfulness”喜樂的教師，怎樣帶出他活潑的個性？」



是的，在書裡我提到這是聖施禮華主要的特質之一，一方面是他那樂觀面對人生的態度十分吸引別人，那才是喜樂的泉源，率直而真誠鞏固了他的性格，總讓人察覺到他是天主的兒子。

另一方面，每當別人向他提問，他總會立即回答而且妙語如珠，讓人高興地見識到他那高超的幽默感；這與他天生的喜樂性格互相輝映。每有失當，含糊，誇張及無禮的批評，他總不慌不忙地把這負面的說話轉化成令人喜出望外的回應。

聖施禮華亦是這方面的教師，他在輕鬆的家庭環境下會讓你捧腹大笑，讓你領略到他的才智及充滿深情的見解。

「在這同時，聖施禮華因他那硬朗的脾性把事情弄得清楚，永不含糊，這樣可帶來壓迫感？他怎樣勸勉別人？」

他確是有硬朗的性格，一位典型的Aragonese人的特性。他常說亦因此上主揀選他創立主業會，有著這性格才能克服重重的障礙而達到目標。實際上，這給周邊帶來緊張的狀況，尤其那些較為陌生或怕羞內向的人；指出別人的錯處是不好受的，因這意味著傷害別人的自尊，可是在這22年的



生活裡，我只有一次在沒有理據的情況下被他責怪，但在瞬息之間當他了解真相後，他隨即懇求我原諒，以一貫的真誠作出行動。

當他糾正別人時，總會在行動上更親切，在第三者看來是毫不經意的。例如：在早上他責備過某人時，在午飯後家庭聚會時，他總會走到那人身邊微笑地把那夾在姆指與食指之間的糖果遞給這人，而我們才知道他早上曾受訓斥過。他遞上這糖果時，總連同一些對兒子們的親密說話如：傻豬，這是你的或小搗蛋，這給你。

「與他一同生活愉快嗎？不是說與一位聖人同住是困難的——你覺得如何？」

施神父亦提過這些事，他提醒我們及他自己要避免這情況，那就是不要為忍受一位聖人的同時亦造就了另一位聖人。我明白如果某人認為自己是聖人，與他生活的人一定要受罪，因這人必有他的一套人生觀尤如嚴密的教規，可是這從來不發生在聖施禮華身上。第一，因他的“聖德”及由此而生的“謙卑與愛德”是完全出於真誠，而聖教會亦肯定及證明這方面的德行。雖然，聖施禮華仍時常稱自己為“愛基督的罪人”。第二，他活出尊重他人自由的愛德，而從不會在別人身上加上教條般的負擔。每當他發覺出錯時，他毫不遮掩地去改正，而他更維護在主業會內個人的自由意向。事實上，快樂爽朗不止出於愛心，而需活化在生活上，在天主賜予聖施禮華的眾多神恩中，對沒有直接與他接觸的人，可能不為察覺的是：他能以喜樂與幽默感溫和地穩步向上，引領人歸向天主。在“道路”裡他這樣說：「真正的德行並不是憂愁或惹人反感，而是親切的喜樂。」他就是這樣地生活，那便可理解到與他一起是極好的，雖然有時候因他的疲倦及疾病令家人擔憂，這當然是難過的事，但我們都曉得這只是在愛、平安與喜樂的汪洋中偶爾遇上的礁石。

「他如何處理那這棘手的事情，如誹謗，對耶穌冒犯或對於他的孩子面對疾病及死亡？」

我常見到他作出超聖的表現，是個充滿著大愛及真誠信仰的人。表現要視



乎不同的事件吧。他都會為那些冒犯天主的事而傷心，無論那是誹謗或缺乏慷慨。但他時常用這套來教導我們：“祈禱、靜默、微笑及寬恕”，我記起他那次既傷心又平靜地面對Maria Hernandez Gamica神父（主業會最初的三位神父其中一位）的病歷報告，他請我作詳細分析，因裡面有很多醫學用語，那時只有我倆，當我開始解釋那病徵及那可致命的預測時，他失聲痛哭，當我讀完後，他說：「兒子，對不起，我做了很壞的榜樣，但至少讓你曉得父親是有顆心的。」隨後，他便慢慢地頌誦“道路”691的經文：「在一切事上，願至聖、至公、至愛的天主聖意，永遠得以奉行，受到讚美，受到舉揚，阿孟，阿孟。」

### 「他又如何面對每天各色各樣平凡的小挫折？」

一般來說這些事情你都不能察覺到對他有任何影響，就如機器壞了，電力停頓了，健康出現問題等等，我想這是因那超聖行動過程的結果。這包括接受天主的旨意，堅毅地忍受那不如意的事及對不便之事處之泰然。他明白這些都是一些「被動的克己」，而他樂意地接受，因為他切望聖化每天的小事情，那亦是主業會的精神所在；若困難是由於熟悉的人缺乏責任感，魯莽及懶散等，反應便大有分別。他會盡力幫助這人改過，並非因為這事情對他帶來不便，而是因冒犯天主及缺乏愛德。

### 「以你多年的經驗，可有對未來加入主業會的人一些提點？」

我會請他們細心聆聽聖施禮華教導人應如何做好那些“規範”「1」，那是主業會信友靈修生活的一部份。他不斷地請求別人“請為我做好規範”。其承繼人歐華路主教再加以解釋：「最重要的是不要把它草草了事，或像在每日要完成的事項清單中逐一剔除，因靈修計劃並不在乎數量，而重要的是質量。聖施禮華說，每一項規範都是與耶穌基督的交往，而非只是履行一些虔敬規則，像趕快地把事情完成，而接著做下一個。

這是我個人的經驗，我們需要找尋每個規範的聖化價值，以愛天主的心盡心盡力去做，這樣才會在每個規範中提升自己經驗天主的臨在，只有這樣，他們才能像聖施禮華一樣成為在俗世中默觀的靈魂。

## 經聖施禮華代禱獲賜之恩惠

### 拖延了三個月的簽約

今早，我為了一個有關法律的問題感到十分擔憂。我們已等了賣方三個月，但他們仍不肯在合同上簽署，這給我們造成很大的困難。在感到沮喪時，我祈求聖施禮華的代禱。你能相信嗎？就在三分鐘前，公證人致電給我，說賣方們已經把合約簽了，整個問題也解決了。我們的主天主是何其偉大和何其慷慨啊！聖施禮華亦然。今日，為主業會是一個特別的日子，我們也為此舉行了一台特別的彌撒，而且在彌撒中的各事項都十分完美。

芝奧斯，墨西哥

2010年6月30日

### 全數賣出

6月13日，我和太太到聖母無玷聖心教堂參與彌撒。彌撒後，太太叫我為聖體櫃旁的一座雕像拍照，出乎我的意料，原來那是座聖施禮華的雕像。當我在拍照時，我迅速地向他祈求，希望他能在耶穌基督前為我農場牲畜的銷售代禱，因為我急於要完成交易。

今日是6月25日，在賣完最後一批牲畜後，我領悟到聖施禮華給我的恩典。雖然有一點辛苦，但我仍能在短短12日內把我農場裡的牲畜全都賣掉。我對整個銷售過程能如此的順利和快速感到十分驚訝。



我寫這封信便是為了感謝聖施禮華給我的這份恩賜。

杰斯，巴西

2010年6月25日

## 我病了

我很想用一個特別的方法來向聖施禮華道謝。在2008年，我生病了差不多三個月，在那些日子，我對他的認識漸深。那時，我在家裡找到一本給兒童閱讀的講述聖施禮華的一生的插圖故事書，閱讀他的經歷就是我在那段日子中力量的泉源。近日，透過我們的聖母和聖施禮華的代禱，我已經被一間美國學校所錄取，並獲得了部分的獎學金，且只等了二天就能成功地辦到簽證。

現在，我還仍在祈禱中，希望能獲得全數的獎學金，我知道聖施禮華一定會為我代禱的。

奈及利亞  
2010年6月

## 我想去足球場

我是個21歲的學生，我以前並不相信天主。但自從我在一所主業會管理的泛美大學就讀後，我學會了怎樣去愛上主。有一次，在偶然的機會下，我在西班牙旅行時，獲得了一張聖施禮華的祈禱卡，然後我便經常帶著它。

我認識聖施禮華的歷程真是頗特別的。我原先打算到皇馬球場看看，但我的朋友要求我陪他到一些教堂參觀，他並不是一位虔誠的教徒，也不實踐教理，但他的母親吩咐他要到聖堂參觀和照一些相片回去，於是我便提議我們到最鄰近的一所天主教堂去，那所教堂正正是阿穆德娜聖母大教堂。我走了進去，在我參觀教堂內的聖人圖像和雕塑前，我祈求天主把我的腿治癒。我以前曾因踢足球而弄傷了腿，故此站立得太長時間腿便會很痛。在那次歐洲旅行期間，我每每要走上整天的路，我的腿就感到十分疼痛。祈禱後，我便開始在教堂內到處參觀。

突然間我看到了一個聖施禮華的雕像，我真的十分喜歡它，喜歡得我取了很多張放在旁邊的祈禱卡，好讓我回到墨西哥後能分派給其他人。好笑的是，自從我離開教堂的那時起，直到我回到老家墨西哥，我的腿在整個旅程中一直也沒再痛。我把這一切全都歸功於聖施禮華。我十分感謝他，他令我再次相信天主，在意想不到的時候，我在聖堂裡遇上了他，而我腿的痛楚也舒緩了。當我回到墨西哥後，我把取得的祈禱卡贈送給我的朋友們，但其實我最想的是把它們送給那些與天主很疏遠的人，那樣，他們就能跟我一樣感受到信靠天主的快樂了。謝謝！

伊凡，墨西哥  
2010年6月15日

## 不只是一份工作

聖施禮華的祈禱卡完全改變了我的生活。有他在，我感到安穩和堅定。一切要從我的堂區說起，那時，神父——他也是我一位要好的朋友——在教堂門口旁的桌上放了一些聖施禮華的祈禱卡，我便隨手拿起了一張，但由於我未曾聽過聖施禮華這個名字，故也沒多加理會。當時我已失業一年多了，心情十分低落。

某天晚上，我按著祈禱卡上的禱文祈禱，我以我所有的力量祈求，希望他能給我找一份工作。聖施禮華真的回應了我。不出數天，我收到一個電話，它給我提供了工作機會，這可不是任意的一份工作，而是一份我一直夢寐以求的工作，並與我修讀的小學教育培訓有關。那是在一個庇護公寓內當年青年的教師的工作，消息使我樂透了！從那天起，聖施禮華是我生命中很重要的一部分，因為一切我向他所求的，他都在天主我主面前幫我轉求。感謝你，聖施禮華，我承諾會傳播對你的敬禮。

J.A.J.G. 西班牙  
二零一零年八月十一日

## 誰是你的主保？

十二年前，我在一個年青人俱樂部裡幫手。有一天，一些事情發生了，也改變了我的人生。那時我們以海為背景拍照，我倚靠著的欄杆突然斷裂，我往下跌了六米，背部落在木製的防波堤上。之後，我一共做了三次手術，過了一段時間，我慢慢地可以開始走路。我記得在發生意外後幾天，有些來看我的醫生問我說：「誰是你的主保？」「聖施禮華」我回答道。「你跌得那樣，腿部還能活動，你應好好地感謝他。」他們對我說。

最近，我的第二個孩子出世了。由於之前的意外，使我的脊椎留下傷疤，導致當我生第一個孩子時，醫生給我的硬膜外麻醉藥並沒有發揮很大效用。這次第二次分娩，由於時間太緊迫，醫生甚至連注射麻醉藥的時間也沒有，事實上，沒有了這藥物的幫助分娩會更顯困難。我開始向聖施禮華祈求，希望孩子能順利出世。約凌晨一時，我的力氣已用盡了，好像只剩下剖腹這一選擇。但剛好在一時零二分，我的第二個孩子Juanito誕生了！

往後數天，大家仍十分焦慮，醫生認為嬰兒可能要留院一星期，服用抗生素並接受光療。我又再一次向聖施禮華祈求，最後，不需服藥，也不用光療，兩天後我們便回家了。

J.B. 葡萄牙  
二零一零年七月十二日



## 適合兒童至八十六歲人士

數星期前，我在主業會網頁上看到一篇關於聖施禮華“YES”傳記的文章，當我看到上面寫著那是適合兒童至八十歲人士閱讀時，我感到驚訝。我有這樣的反應並不是因為我覺得可笑，而是因為我的祖母——她今年已年屆八十六了。她十分喜歡這本她剛看完的傳記，甚至想重看一遍。我想我應該寫信告訴你們不妨把文章改為：適合兒童至八十六歲人士閱讀。謝謝你們出色的工作，恭喜恭喜！

V.B. 西班牙

二零一零年八月三日

## 一份為我修讀的課程提供資金的工作

今年夏天，我加入了失業大軍，當時的我一直就財政問題感到壓力和擔心。我需要一份工作去為我即將修讀的MSC課程提供資金。我的一位主業會朋友提議我向已行了多次奇蹟及幫了很多人代禱的聖施禮華祈求。當我在主業會中心時，便拿起了一份為工作的九天祈禱單張和一張聖施禮華的祈禱卡，我希望透過聖施禮華的代禱向天主祈求能找到一份教學的工作。我的朋友亦有為我祈禱。但坦白地說，當時的我對此事並沒有很大期望，同時我對教學範疇的就業情況也不樂觀，故一直認為成數不大。

某天早上，我收到一家零售公司的拒絕求職信後，我再次檢閱郵箱，發現一封從市政府寄來的信，他們給我提供了一份從事教學的工作，每星期需工作兩天半，剛好是我可從大學課程中抽空出來的時間。我很感激聖施禮華的代禱，並感激上主回應了我的請求。

C.R. 蘇格蘭

二零一零年七月二十二日



蘇格蘭聖施禮華與輔士、哈爾及神父、本堂神父(右五位)合影於聖施禮華畫像前。

## 人生、聖施禮華聖像儀式

他的敬禮是九月廿七日。  
聖施禮華的生日則由孝為姊妹介紹。

聖施禮華於一九〇二年一月九日誕生於西班牙阿拉岡省，一九二五年三月廿八日他在薩拉高沙市晉鐸。他於一九二八年十月二日受到聖神的默感，創立了主業會。一九七五年六月廿六日在羅馬辭世。主業會的精神是在日常生活透過工作聖化自己。致力於使徒工作並與眾分享。教宗若望保羅二世於二〇〇二年十月六日在羅馬列主業會創辦人為聖人。他的敬禮日定於六月廿六日。  
聖文生及聖施禮華畫像是由菲律賓藝術家 Daniel Tansok 先生所繪製。  
聖若瑟木製畫像是由菲律賓藝術家 Domingo 先生所繪製。  
繼主業會在講道中說：我們祈禱聖人代為轉求，同時學習這些聖人的方表。這三位聖人在本堂出現，正如聖靈教訓

## 從惡習中解脫出來

聖施禮華，我想為你在我身上行的奇蹟感謝你。我每天抽煙的數量很大，一天一天的在危害自己的生命，我曾很認真的想過戒菸，但我一直認為這是不可能的。後來，我的父親因抽煙而死亡，我的侄女Gisella和姐姐Jane也下定決心戒菸，這使我也不敢怠慢。我開始吃一些有助減低抽煙意慾的口香糖，但又害怕會引起一些併發症或還是沒法成功地戒菸，所以我便開始了九天的祈禱。令我驚訝的是，我抽煙的意慾全失了，連口香糖都不需要，現在不抽煙也沒有問題。毫無疑問地我已從惡習中解脫出來了。感謝你聖施禮華！

秘魯

二零一零年七月二十二日

## 在祈禱帶領下的複習

我在PIURA大學讀書，當時正值期末考試的第二周，六月一日星期四是難度很高的編程考試，內容都是這一學年裡最複雜的課題，我花了很多時間複習。每當複習前，我都會看著聖施禮華的祈禱卡以及一張網頁內找到的聖施禮華照片，我把我黃昏溫習的時間奉獻給主，並求聖施禮華在我考試那天助佑我。那天到了，考試並沒有預期中艱難，當成績發佈時，我很驚訝我通過了那次考試並成功地完成了整個課程。我從不懷疑聖施禮華代禱的效力。我走進大學的小教堂去感謝他的幫助。這是他真的會聆聽我們的另一見證，而我們亦應對上主抱有極大的信心。

Elvira Y. 秘魯

## 職業籃球：高人一等的生活？



那是2004年，在我們對皇家馬德里比賽中的最後16秒，教練終於注意到我了。當其時我十九歲，緊張非常。

我深深地吸了一口大氣，脫去長袖外衣向球場跑去。某人在橫邊界外傳球給我，我首先來一個假身，然後再以運球方式投籃。就在此時皇家馬德里的中衛撞向我，天呀！很疼呢！一次個人犯規，兩次罰球全中。呼！隨著哨子聲響，我鬆了一口氣，球賽結束了，我望向計分牌，對我們隊來說真是一次重創！但如果我的祖父恩里克今天在這兒的話，他會為我的表現而感到高興… 以前他常載我到球場比賽的。

前他常載我到球場比賽的。

嗯，至少我在CB格拉納達隊充當後衛的的第一場比賽結束了。但到現在仍不知我的甲級聯賽夢會否實現。我告訴自己：「要小心，不要因這次賽事而洋洋得意。」於是，我收拾好行裝登上大巴，兩旁的人都抬頭看著我們，彷彿我們是什麼大人物似的。他們似乎在說：「你看那些高大的傢伙… 他們一定是過著高人一等的生活！」

但事實並非如此。我們的生活並沒有與眾不同。在車廂內，大家都嘗試找方法讓雙腿感到舒適些，單憑這一點，大家就意識到我們已回到現實。我的問題與其他球員相比可算小了，他們高六尺十一寸卻要把雙腳蜷縮於座位之間。相比之下六尺三寸的我在隊友旁邊並不算突出。

坐在大巴上，一些愚蠢的想法開始在腦裏盤旋：「你剛剛與皇家馬德里對陣，現在所有女孩都會傾慕你，你將要成名了。」於是我開始回想起剛成為一位籃球員時的那場比賽。



我還清楚記得，當時孩子們在場上跑來跑去，看台那邊氣氛緊張，家長們叫囂不斷，教練則在邊界外大聲呼喊。那時，我坐在板凳上，看著一個防守力不太強的男孩，他的惰性使我氣憤，於是我失去耐性地向他喊道：「你在那兒一點用也沒有！」突然，一位女孩在看台上跳起來說：「你說的沒用是什麼意思？那男孩的表現一點都不差，你有認真地看嗎？」我嚇了一下，我從不喜歡爭論，也想不出該如何回她的話，結果我紅着臉，坐回板凳上。

其後，我參加過不少賽事。十四歲那年，我被選為格拉納達隊的出色球員並獲頒發獎項，那時我和我的父母一樣，既緊張又興奮。當我走向頒獎台領獎時，那個女孩又出現了，「哦，原來他們就是要把獎頒給你！」明顯地，這帶出了兩件事：第一，我又臉紅了；第二，這位女孩…很有個性。

原來，朱莉婭（那個堅強和果斷的女孩的名字）也是打籃球的（甚至比我打得還要好）。由於大家興趣相近，所以我們開始熟絡起來，後來我更喜歡上這個女孩並與她訂婚。與此同時，我的生活也變得忙碌。我到美國走了一趟後回到西班牙，便開始攻讀工商，但同時我亦抽很多時間用作籃球訓練和到其他城市比賽。我的教練勸告我：「貢薩洛，你要冷靜下來，學懂分配時間。每天定時練習和上課，這是一條漫長的道路，現在只是你的開始而已。」

那時，我以為我在運動上遇到的危機是很個人的事，就是需獨自堅強面對的那種…但後來朱莉婭母親因癌症離逝，她面對疾病的態度教曉了我：不論快樂或痛苦，我們都為他人而活。出生時我們不是孤單一人，離世時亦一樣。

我不停地反問自己：「我未婚妻的母親每天受著那麼多痛苦，但仍充滿喜樂，她是如何做到的呢？」我無法理解。在朱莉婭的母親患病期間，從她的笑容，從她的熱情好





客，她都活現出「天主在小事中」的精神。我不知該怎樣形容，這是很簡單卻很難用言語來表達的。

最後，我才明白，從她身上散發出來的是主業會的基督徒精神。對我而言，天主只臨在於主日彌撒和生命中的關鍵時刻：當進球時，當我們贏了比賽時... 可是在那裡，那個家裡，我那個長期臥床的未來岳母身上，我發現了即使你高大強壯，天主也與你同在，因為你永遠是一個渺小而需要幫助的小孩。



現在我也是主業會的一員，在小事上，我嘗試把教練給予的建議付諸於行；在重要事上，我每天參加彌撒而且在一個月前，我和那個有個性的女孩結婚了。

我現在二十四歲，手臂上的紋身已消失了，但在我的運動鞋上印著「一切皆為了祢」的字樣。那是在我結婚前已印上的。我用它來向我的隊友解釋，我們正在進行一個更具價值的比賽：永恆生命盃。

最後，我明白到，人生總會有高低潮...但是我們的主在二千年前已為了我們降生成人，現在我正嘗試與祂接近，同時亦繼續享受與隊友們坐在大巴上到處去，聽聽音樂，慶祝勝利...啊，對了！自從我加入了主業會後，每當我上場比賽時，我都會望向看台尋找一位翹着腿，手持橫幅的護守天使，橫幅上寫著：「仍在享受賽事，享受生活。與天主活在一起的爺爺，恩里克。」

## 天賜的驚喜

莎蓮娜是一位23歲的中國人正在奧大利攻讀鋼琴演奏。在遭逢一場人生劇變後，她在一所大學宿舍中，尋找到新朋友及一條通往天主的路。

2010/06/28

當我在2003年，從中國的蘭州到歐洲時我從沒想到這不僅改變了我的職業生涯，而且更改變我整个人生。



### 夢想成真：維也納

每天練習13小時的鋼琴是我及其他把音樂作為終身事業的年輕中國子弟每天的生活。我有高遠的理想：立志能在音樂比賽中贏取到維也納音樂學院進修的門檻。而我也與我當時的男朋友——一位天才橫溢的長笛手，一同成功取得這張通往「音樂之都」的通行證！我們還一起討論對未來的計畫，考慮共組家庭。

然而卻事與願違。一次當我們回國探親時，他不幸在車禍中喪生，這對我而言實在是大大地打擊，但天主的計劃通常一開始是不易理解的，我記得母親的幾位基督徒朋友當時語重深長地對我說：「要繼續信賴天主！」，不過當時我還沒有領洗。

### 威靈 (Wahing) — 一個新家

回到維也納時我需要找一個住所，在威靈我找到一個女生宿舍，是由主業會的會員所辦的。說來真是幸運，在那兒我得到在學習音樂方面無限的支持，同時我也發覺到活著並不只是為了工作；為了演奏會不分晝夜地苦練，不應該是生活的全部。



男朋友的離世令我產生很多問號，在尋找天主的同時帶來很多掙扎，而在與死亡面對面後，我慢慢地找回了生命！我與其他宿舍的朋友們一起到郊外遠足、我學習德文、打理屋外花園…我也不再刻板地每天練習13小時鋼琴；這確實是條漫長的路，我需要除去一些舊習，我不再去占卜、參考星座，決定要把自己的生命把握在手裡，相信天主會牽著我的手向前邁進。我對天主的信任不斷增進，祂永遠在那裡等候著我，而我也試著將每次練習都轉換成一場又一場的音樂會，把光榮歸於天主。

### 深刻的喜悅與平安

我希望學到更多有關天主教的信仰。在學生宿舍裡，我找到了答案，經過對這信仰確切的認識和省思，2005年的復活節我在大學宿舍的小堂接受洗禮，那裡每個人都為我忙進忙出，我們一起去買禮儀要用的蠟燭、白色洋裝還有一對耳環；我每次演出時都戴著它，好讓我記起生命中最重要的時刻。我的靈魂滿溢著信德及喜樂，而一股深刻的平安感進入了我的生命。

現在我在林茲(Linz)跟隨一位教授上課，我知道我信仰的新生命需要天天更新。為了要在日常生活中找到天主，我研讀聖經、與天主交談、經常領受聖事。在林茲我也認識一些主業會的朋友，在堅定信仰方面找到更大的鼓勵。我對我這新生命的格言是：「天主是永不動搖的靠山！」



Celina 在洗禮中

## 在父母的餐館上慕道課

邱珊珊醫生生於中國的溫州，她在西班牙那瓦拉大學醫院 (University Clinic of Navarra) 攻讀外科整容。

2010/07/24

珊珊全家移民到馬德里是因為父親希望女兒們能在民主的國家生活，她的祖父母因為是地主在毛澤東的時代受到很多磨難，雖然她的父母並沒有宗教信仰、祖父是佛教徒，但今天的珊珊是主業會的獨身會員(Associate)。



邱珊珊是那瓦拉大學醫院的第2年駐院外科整容醫生

「我認識天主的信仰源於學校，當到達西班牙時，我們在公立學校讀書，可以選擇宗教或倫理科。當時父母相信天主教是普遍西班牙人的信仰，認識多一點可幫助融入社會。」

珊珊發現自己慢慢地喜歡天主教的觀點，「最能觸動我的是童貞聖母及守護天使，我很高興知道雖然我不是天主教徒，聖母卻依然愛我，而天主更在每個人還未出生以前已給了他一位天使保護他。」。

不久後她便希望受洗而父母也贊同，雖然他們相信這樣會更融入社會，但他們亦感到天主教信仰使人變得更人性化。「為預備洗禮我們在父母的餐館裡上教理課」。12歲時，她與兩位姊妹及表兄妹一同領洗及初領聖體。



邱珊珊醫生

### 聖母的貼紙

「當完成中學時我們的老師推薦我倆到塞納拉大學 (Senera College)，而我及妹妹也一同報讀。那時，我被邀請參加一個靈修避靜，我不懂得那是什麼，只知道要到一個營地叫做避靜公園；我的導師耐心親切地講解什麼是避靜後我們終於出發了。在幾天過後我得到第二次的轉化，其實我的信仰在領洗後不久便冷卻下來，但在這裡讓我決心再次投入。」



這便是珊珊如何認識主業會，開始去主業會的中心。「最打動我的是每當出外及返回時，都先到小聖堂向天主打招呼說聲Hello，我和妹妹把這習慣帶到家裡，我們貼了一枚聖母貼紙，每當進出時都會打個招呼。」

漸漸地她認識了主業會的精神，而且也發現「那就像一副合適的手套。天主愛我們每個人，並對我們寄予厚望。」

### 為未來工作

在馬德里完成醫學課程後，珊珊搬到邦布隆納駐院實習，每天的工作很緊密，像是會診、手術、研究及做論文；其中她最喜歡的是微創手術，珊珊開玩笑地說：「可能，因為中國人比較小心翼翼、一絲不苟吧！」



那瓦拉大學醫院 (University Clinic of Navarre)

對一般的中國人來說工作總是生命的第一位，但珊珊卻覺得在工作裡可尋找天主而達到個人聖化的途徑，「每天我會為與我一起工作的人及病人祈禱，這樣會幫助我把每項工作奉獻及與主同在。」

她雖然沒有住在Larrabide大學宿舍，但和一些成員們照顧住在宿舍裡的大一新鮮人。「每星期一我們會碰面，安排整個星期的活動。現在我們正籌備羅馬藝術及一些文化性參訪活動。另外我們也試著在培育陶成方面幫助她們，就好像他們在家的時候父母會做的事一樣。」

## First Edition of Holy Rosary in Vietnamese

This collection of short commentaries on the mysteries of the Rosary written by St Josemaría has been translated to Vietnamese and published in Ho Chi Minh city in June 2010.

2010/08/02

In this year while celebrating the 80th anniversary of the founding of the women in Opus Dei, the first edition of the Holy Rosary by St Josemaría was published in Vietnamese in Ho Chi Minh City in June 2010.



The book is a collection of short commentaries on the 15 mysteries of the rosary: joyful, sorrowful and glorious. It was first published in Spanish in 1934, entitled *Santo Rosario*. St. Josemaría wrote it in one sitting one morning of 1931, during his thanksgiving after celebrating Mass for the Augustinian nuns at their convent of Santa Isabel in Madrid. It overflowed from his frequent contemplation of the life of Christ and his child-like devotion to the Blessed Virgin.



"The beginning of the way, at the end of which you will find yourself completely carried away with love for Jesus, is a trusting love for Mary," he tells us in the preface.

These commentaries in Holy Rosary aim to help the reader enter more deeply into the scenes from the life of our Lord and his Blessed Mother; it leads towards a trusting dialogue with our Lady who brings us to the Blessed Trinity.

From his own experience he advised, "Pause for a few seconds –three or four– in silent meditation to consider each mystery before you recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary's of that decade. I am sure this practice will increase your recollection and the fruits of your prayer."

Holy Rosary, written in 1931, naturally contains no reference to the Mysteries of Light added in 2003 by Pope John Paul II to highlight the Christological content of the rosary. However, St Josemaría had frequently contemplated and preached on the scenes of the new mysteries. In order to help readers meditate on the complete Rosary, excerpts from his writings that refer to the Mysteries of Light have been included in all subsequent editions.

Holy Rosary is currently published in 25 languages. It has sold over 700,000 copies. This first edition in Vietnamese was made possible through the translation of Monsignor Barnaba Nguyen Van Phuong, and the collaboration of Our Lady of Peace Bookshop and friends from Ho Chi Minh city.

"Today as in other times, the Rosary must be a powerful weapon, to enable us to win in our interior struggle, and to help all souls. Exalt holy Mary with your tongue: God asks you for reparation, and for praise from your lips. May you always want to know

## The Brass Chalice

**St Josemaría celebrated Mass daily for many years with a chalice made of brass. He tells us where the real charm of the chalice lies.**

2010/06/01

One Sunday morning in June 1974, in the Coliseo Theatre in Buenos Aires (Argentina), Msgr. Escrivá had hardly started speaking when an Argentinean gentleman, with a smile on his lips and a somewhat mischievous gesture, intervened.

“When a very close friend of mine was ordained a priest I gave him a present of a gold chalice. Some friends of mine who are Catholics told me my present was socially irrelevant. Other said that I was lacking in social conscience.

It also happens – please don’t laugh – that we have a very fine pedigree dog at home which costs us quite a lot to keep. None of my friends has told me that I haven’t got a social conscience because I keep the dog. I would like you to tell me what you think about the present of the chalice and the dog.”

Everyone in the get-together was very amused by the question. They became serious, and then laughed once more, when they heard the reply from Msgr. Escrivá.

**“As a rule I celebrate Mass with a brass chalice. I would love to use a gold chalice daily and I would think it was not good enough. God bless you, because you have given that little bit of your affection to our Lord. You did well! All you have to do is to read what God our Lord laid down in the Old Testament, and how everything had to be made of gold. Everything had to be of gold!”**

**“Now, in some people’s opinion, anything can be good enough for our Lord and nothing is good enough for themselves. They have become egocentric, wretched, thinking only of themselves. To our Lord, they offer the sacrifice of Cain. History is repeating itself. A good son sacrifices the very best he has, gold, whatever he can give, what is precious to him. The others would want to offer mud, wretchedness.”**

**“As for the dog, remember St. Francis of Assisi. That will console you, and you can carry on being affectionate to your dog. Why should we treat animals badly? If you have a good heart for an animal, I know you have even more heart for your neighbour. Let every needy person find in you an open heart and a generous hand. God bless you.”**

### A Lesson in Honesty

It was not the first time that Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer had referred to that brass chalice. On other occasions he had commented: **I celebrate Mass each day, and have done so for many years, with a chalice which cost me three hundred pesetas. It is a bit like me; people see it and say: “It’s made of gold...” But it’s all show. When you dismantle it, you find written on the inside in big letters the simple statement: “Brass”.**

All the charm of this chalice stems from the hands that fashioned it and coated it in a very fine layer of gold. Nevertheless, the craftsman was honest enough to admit clearly that he had made it from brass. He wrote the fact in a hidden but accessible place. He did his work so well that at first sight no one, not even an expert, would doubt the richness of the sacred vessel. It was necessary to take it to pieces and look inside to discover the truth. Only the cup was of silver, following the rules of the liturgy. It was all a lesson in sincerity, in naturalness, in love for what is genuine and authentic, which in addition moved the Founder of Opus Dei to make an act of humility.

**“When I raise the chalice in the Holy Mass after the Consecration, I see in that chalice a reflection of my poor life: the struggles, the victories and the defeats. The victories are his, Christ’s; the defeats are mine.”**

With such confidence in God, defeats can never be an occasion for being disheartened or sad. When one seeks strength in the arms of God our Father, one begins to understand the lesson of this chalice. **It does not want to deceive anyone with its golden appearance, because it shouts aloud, saying: “Brass!”**

Then a resolution flows naturally: **“Be very sincere, my children. Do not hide your wretchedness when receiving spiritual direction. Only thus will your lives shine like jewels and your hearts will truly become thrones for God, who will triumph in your weakness.”**

### Our Best for God

The Founder of Opus Dei had a lover’s heart and he needed to show his love just as every lover does. As he often repeated, he did not have one heart for loving people with and a different heart for loving God. That is why, when there was not even enough money for essentials, there was always a freshly picked rose for the picture of Our Lady in the room where he worked daily for many hours. It was a way of showing externally the love he had in his heart. Richness in the things of worship – as we see clearly in the anecdotes we have recalled here – was the outpouring of a genuine and tender affection of a lover to whom everything seemed little for the Person he loved: **How little a life is to offer to God! (The Way, 420).**

This was his constant teaching. To devote the best things to worship was a specific way of showing real detachment from earthly things, of accepting wholeheartedly God’s dominion over created things and of expressing a spirit of adoration and piety. He deeply appreciated and was very grateful for the efforts which people of Opus Dei made all over the world to practise this refinement of love.

**Our Lord is very glad to see that you treat him lovingly, caring affectionately and tenderly for the things of worship, which is where we strive to devote the best our blessed poverty can gather together. And Jesus must be glad also to see each one of you entering into intimate personal dialogue with him. May God bless you!**



## Teacher of Cheerfulness

Interview with Fr Jose Luis Soria about St Josemaría

2010/06/13

Jose Luis Soria was a doctor who first met St Josemaría in 1953. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1956 and from then until St Josemaría's death in 1975 he lived and worked with him in Rome. Fr Soria now exercises his priestly ministry in Canada.



**You have said that one of St Josemaría's characteristics was his cheerfulness, and in fact you published a book called "Maestro de buen humor" (Teacher of cheerfulness). How was this characteristic shown?**

Yes, in the book I explain what I think was one of St Josemaría's main characteristics. On the one hand his optimistic, smiling attitude to life, which made him such an attractive, positive person to know. That was what can truly be called his cheerfulness, his joyfulness. It was part of his temperament, strengthened by his sincere, radical awareness of the fact that he was a child of God.



On the other hand, his ready response to others, with a quip or joke, also showed a highly developed sense of humour, going beyond mere cheerfulness. It was true wit, a rapid capacity for seeing what was incongruous, ambiguous, or indelicate, and responding with an unexpected, amusing twist. St Josemaría was also a teacher in that sense. When you saw him in a relaxed family setting, you would often smile or laugh out loud at his intelligent, affectionate, humorous comments.

**At the same time, St Josemaría had a strong, powerful personality and put things very clearly. Didn't this sometimes create tension? How did he correct people?**

It's true that he had a strong personality, typical of his Aragonese background. He used to say that that was one reason why God chose him to found Opus Dei, because there were so many obstacles to overcome in getting the Work going. And it did give rise to tension, especially if it was someone who didn't yet know St Josemaría too well, or was of a timid disposition. It's always painful to be corrected by someone, because it wounds our self-love. But in the twenty-two years I spent with him I can only recall one occasion when he corrected me without good cause. And as soon as he realized the facts, he begged my pardon and showed me his usual affection, with deeds.

I would say that every time he corrected someone he always added some special

sign of affection, which might seem insignificant to a third party. I remember, for instance, what he used to do if he had reprimanded any of us who were working with him in the mornings. After lunch, when we sat down for a bit of family conversation, St Josemaría would come in smiling and holding up a sweet – just one – between finger and thumb. And we always knew straight away that the sweet was for the person he'd corrected before. He'd hand it over accompanied by the sort of affectionate remark he often used to make to his children: 'Here, dummy,' or 'Here you are, rascal.'

**Was it pleasant living with him? It's sometimes said to be hard living with a saint – what would you say?**

St Josemaría himself used to say the same sort of thing, when he warned us that we – including himself – should avoid the situation where 'to put up with one saint, it takes two saints'. I have always understood that to mean that if someone thinks they're a saint they are hard to live with, because they make their opinions or points of view almost into dogmas of faith. That never happened with St Josemaría. Firstly, because his sanctity – and hence his humility and charity – were absolutely genuine. The Magisterium of the Church has confirmed that fact with its own supreme, definitive testimony, although St Josemaría himself always said he was just 'a sinner who loves Jesus Christ'.

And secondly, because he exercised great love for everyone's personal freedom, and never imposed things on others as dogmas. And when he realized he was wrong about something, he said so, and he ardently defended the freedom of everyone in Opus Dei.

The fact is that cheerfulness is not only compatible with charity but can be one of the best ways of practising it. Among the charisms that God granted St Josemaría was one that might go unnoticed by people who never met him: he could lead people to God up the gentle, steady slope of cheerfulness and good humour. In *The Way* he wrote that 'True virtue is not sad or gloomy, but pleasantly cheerful.' That's the way he always tried to live. That meant it was great living with him, even though there were times when his tiredness or sickness made itself felt in family life. Such times could be hard, but we all knew that they were like single reefs in a great ocean of affection, peace and joy.

**How did he react to objectively difficult things: slander, unfaithfulness to Jesus Christ, or the sickness or death of someone he loved?**

I always saw him react with great supernatural sense, as a man with a big heart and genuine faith. Depending on what the difficulty was, he might be sad if it implied unfaithfulness to Jesus Christ, whether it was a piece of slander, or a lack of generosity towards God. But he applied the method he always advised us to use: 'Pray, keep quiet, smile, and forgive.' I remember his suffering, and at the same time his peacefulness, when he received the medical information about the mortal illness of one of the first three priests to be ordained in Opus Dei, Fr Jose Maria Hernandez Garnica. St Josemaría asked me to explain the medical report to him in detail, because it was written in technical language. The two of us were alone together, and when I began to explain the meaning of the diagnosis, and the

seriousness of the medical prognosis, St Josemaría broke down and cried. After I finished reading, he said, 'I'm sorry, my son, about the bad example I've set you. But at least you can see that the Father does have a heart.' And then he said, slowly, savouring it, the prayer he included as point 691 of *The Way*: 'May the most just and most loveable Will of God be done, be fulfilled, be praised and eternally exalted above all things forever. Amen. Amen.'

### And what about little ordinary, everyday setbacks?

Normally you couldn't tell that those things affected him at all – things like machines breaking down, power-cuts, personal medical problems, all that. But I think that what looked like him not reacting was actually the result of a supernatural process that included accepting God's will, fortitude in putting up with discomfort, and detachment from what contributed to his personal convenience, among other things. He realized that these things were 'passive mortifications', and he accepted them willingly, out of a desire to sanctify little and ordinary things, which is very much part of the spirit of Opus Dei.

It was different if the difficulty involved a lack of responsibility, carelessness, laziness, etc. on the part of someone he knew. Most often he reacted, sometimes forcefully, to correct and thus help the person concerned, but he did this not because he had been inconvenienced but because it implied an offence against God, or at least a lack of love for God.

### What would you like to pass on of your personal experience in Opus Dei, to those who join it in the future?

I'd like to tell them to listen carefully to St Josemaría when he impressed on people that they should fulfill the norms<sup>[1]</sup> that are part of the spiritual plan of life of the faithful of the Prelature. 'Fulfill the norms for me!' he would say endlessly. But as his successor Don Alvaro del Portillo used to explain, it's also necessary not to fall into merely getting them done. We can't just tick them off on a list of things we have to get through, we can't be content with fulfilling the right quantity but not caring too much about the quality.

St Josemaría said that each norm has to be a real encounter with Jesus Christ, not just a pious act that we do out of obligation, like getting it over with so we can move on to something else. This is my experience: people need to discover the sanctifying value of each of the norms, by doing them faithfully, with a lot of love for God and the greatest possible concentration. I would tell them to do the norms in such a way that the level of their awareness of God's presence rises with each norm. Like that, and only like that, they will come to be contemplative souls in the middle of the world, as St Josemaría was.

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[1] The norms of Christian devotion practiced by the faithful of Opus Dei aim to help them get to know, relate to and love Jesus Christ more and more. For example, going to Mass, receiving Holy Communion, going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently, reading the Holy Gospel and other spiritual writings, saying the Rosary, spending time in mental prayer, etc

## Favours granted through the intercession of St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer

### Three months refusing to sign

This morning I was very worried about a legal problem. For three months we had been waiting for the seller to sign the contract. This meant huge problems for us. In desperation I prayed to Saint Josemaria for help, and would you believe it?! Just three minutes ago the notary called me to say that they have signed, and the whole affair is now sorted. How great, how wonderful, how generous God our Lord is, and Saint Josemaria. Today is a special day for the Work: there was a special Mass here and it was perfectly beautiful in every way.

G. O. C., Mexico  
June 30, 2010

### Sales completed one hundred per cent

June 13, I went to Mass with my wife in the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. After Mass she asked me to take a photo of a statue that was near the Tabernacle, which, to my surprise, was a small statue of St. Josemaria Escriva. As I took the photo I prayed rapidly that he would intercede before Jesus Christ for an intention connected with the sale of animals from my farm, which I needed to complete immediately.

Today, June 25, after selling the last of the animals, I realized that I have received a great grace from St. Josemaria: in just twelve days I sold one hundred per cent of our farm stock, despite the difficult times. I was surprised at how the sales had been conducted: it was all done calmly and quickly. I am writing this because I want to give thanks for this grace.



J. C., Brazil  
June 25, 2010



### I was sick

I would like to thank Saint Josemaria in a special way. I really got to know him better when I was sick for about 3 months in 2008. I found an illustrated book for children in my house which contained his life story. Reading about St Josemaria's life experiences was a source of strength to me during that period. Presently through the intercession of St Josemaria and Our Lady I have been able to gain admission to study in the USA, get a partial scholarship, and obtain my visa in 2 days!

I am still praying for a full scholarship and I know St Josemaria will help me with his powerful intercession.

Nigeria  
June, 2010

### I wanted to go to the football stadium

I'm a 21-year-old student. I didn't believe in God before, but since I started studying at the Universidad Panamericana, an Opus Dei corporate work, I have been learning to love God. I always carry around with me a prayer-card of St Josemaria that I found in a church in Madrid, 'just by chance'. The way I came in contact with St Josemaria there was quite unusual. I wanted to go and see the Real Madrid football stadium, while my best friend, who doesn't really practise his faith, asked me to take him to a church, because his mother had told him to visit churches and take some photos. I told him we could go to the nearest Catholic church, which turned out to be the Cathedral of Almudena. I went into the church and before beginning to look at the pictures and statues of saints in it, I asked God to help me with my leg – I had a football injury which hurt when I stood up for a long time. On that trip to Europe we were spending the whole day walking around, and it was getting really painful. I began to walk round the inside of the Church.

Suddenly I saw a statue of St Josemaria which I really liked – so much so that I took some of the prayer-cards near it to give them to people when I got back to Mexico. The funny thing was that from the time I left that church until I got home to Mexico I had no further trouble from my leg. I attribute all of this to St Josemaria, because thanks to him I began believing in God again and, not having expected to find him in that church, my leg got better. Back in Mexico I started giving the prayercard to my friends, but what I would most like to do is give them to the people who are furthest away from God, so that they too can feel as happy as I do now that I believe in God. Thank you!

Ivan A., Mexico  
June 15, 2010

### Not just a job

The prayer-card of Saint Josemaria has changed my life completely. Because I have him with me, I feel secure and firm in life. Everything began at my local church, when the priest, who is a good friend of mine, put some prayer-cards on a table by the door. I took one but didn't think much about it as I'd never heard of Saint Josemaria. I'd been out of work for over a year and was really desperate.

One night I said the prayer on his prayer-card and asked him with all my strength to get me a job, and he did. Just a few days later I had a call with a job offer, not just any job, but the kind I'd dreamed of, and connected with my training as a primary school teacher. The job I was offered was as tutor in sheltered apartments for young people. I was overjoyed. From that day on Saint Josemaria has been a fundamental part of my life, because everything I ask him for, he intercedes for me before God our Lord. Thank you, Saint Josemaria, and I promise to spread devotion to you.

J.A.J.G., Spain  
August 11, 2010

### Who's your patron saint?

Twelve years ago I was a helper in a club for young people. One day something happened that changed my life. We were having our photo taken against the background of the sea, the rail gave way and I fell about six meters, landing on my back on a wooden breakwater. I had three operations and after some time I began to walk again. In the days immediately after the accident, some of the doctors who came in to see me asked me, "Who's your patron saint?" "Saint Josemaria Escriva," I said. "Then you should thank him very much for being able to move your legs after a fall like that," they told me.

Recently I had my second baby. The accident had left my spine scarred, with the result that when I had my first baby the epidural I was given did not have very much effect.

This time my labour was so fast there wasn't even time to administer an epidural, and without that help, it was hard for the baby to be born. I began praying to Saint Josemaria that the baby could be born normally. By about one o'clock

**人生、聖施禮華聖像儀式**

聖像的敬禮於九月廿七日，在聖施禮華的生日舉行，由耶穌介紹。

聖像敬禮於一九〇二年一月九日發生在西班牙阿拉瓦省，於一九二五年三月廿八日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九二八年十月二日在聖彼得聖殿，於一九三二年十月二日在聖彼得聖殿，於一九三五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九三七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九三九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九四一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九四三年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九四五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九四七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九四九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九五一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九五三年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九五五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九五七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九五九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九六一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九六三年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九六五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九六七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九六九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九七一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九七三年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九七五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九七七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九七九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九八一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九八三年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九八五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九八七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九八九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九九一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九九三年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九九五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九九七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於一九九九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇〇一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇〇三年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇〇五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇〇七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇〇九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇一一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇一三年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇一五年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇一七年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇一九年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿，於二〇二一年六月廿六日在羅馬聖彼得聖殿。



聖施禮華與耶穌主教、聖彼得神父、本堂神父（右五座）全部聖像敬禮畢後。

in the morning I was exhausted, and the only option seemed to be a cesarian section. But then, at just two minutes past one, my son Juanito was born! The next couple of days were an anxious time, as the doctors thought the baby would have to stay in hospital for a week and be given antibiotics and phototherapy. I prayed to Saint Josemaria again, and it turned out neither treatment was needed. After two days, we went home.

*J. B., Portugal*  
July 12, 2010

#### **For children up to 86**

A few weeks ago I read an article on this website about a biography of Saint Josemaria called "Yes!" And I was surprised that it said it was for children up to 80. Not because it sounded like a joke, but because my grandmother is 86, she has just read the book, and she simply loved it. Now she wants to start reading it all over again. I thought I'd better write and tell you this so you can update the article and say "for children up to 86". Congratulations and thank you for all your good work!

*V. B., Spain*  
August 3, 2010

#### **A job to finance my course**

I was stressed out and worried about my finances and my place in the world when I lost my job this summer. I needed a job to enable me to finance a MSc I am starting soon. A friend of mine from Opus Dei suggested I pray to Saint Josemaria as he had performed many miracles and intercessions for people. Whilst at Opus Dei I picked up the Novena for work and his prayer card. I prayed to God through the intercession of Saint Josemaria to find a teaching job. I didn't think much more of it to be honest as I was convinced that due to the dire job market for teachers that the possibility was a lost one. My friend prayed for me too.

Then one morning right after I had received a rejection letter for a local retail job I checked my mail box again and saw another official looking letter. This letter was from the local council offering me a teaching job for 2.5 days per week. The exact number of days I could devote to a job when not in University. I am bowled over and SO thankful to Saint Josemaria for his intercession and our Lord God for granting me this favour.

*C. R., Scotland*  
July 22, 2010

#### **I am free from that vice**

Saint Josemaria Escriva, I want to thank you for the miracle received. I was shortening my life by smoking many cigarettes a day and I really, really wanted to stop, but I thought it was impossible. Then my father died because of his smoking. My niece Gisella and my sister Jane promised to stop smoking, and when I heard them saying this, I didn't want to get left behind. I bought some chewing gum that helps you stop smoking and began using it, but I was afraid of health complications and worried that I wouldn't manage to stop, so I began praying novenas and to my surprise, I didn't even need the gum because I lost the desire to smoke and had no problem about not smoking, and I can say without doubt that I am now free from the vice. Thank you Saint Josemaria Escriva!

*Peru*  
July 22, 2010

#### **A study guided by prayer**

I study at the University of Piura, Peru. I was in the second week of my final exams. On Thursday June 1, I had a very difficult programming exam, on the most complicated subjects in the year's work. I spent a lot of time revising. Before beginning to study, I would look at the prayer-card of Saint Josemaria and one of his photos which comes on this website. I offered up the evening's study and begged Saint Josemaria to help me on the day of the exam. The day came, and the exam didn't seem as hard as I had expected. When the results came out, I saw to my surprise that I had passed that exam and the whole course. Never for a moment did I doubt the effectiveness of Saint Josemaria's intercession. I went to the oratory of the University to thank him for his help. This is one more proof that he really does hear us and we have to have great faith in God.

*Elvira Y., Peru*  
July 8, 2010



## “I was eager to help out in a place without as many resources”

**Dr. Sylvia Sesé is an internist at Monkole Hospital, an apostolic work of Opus Dei in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo.**

2010/08/10



Sylvia Sesé

Sylvia Sesé is an internist specializing in tropical medicine at Monkole Hospital in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo), where she has practiced medicine and taught for the past nine years. Dr. Sesé was born and educated in Barcelona. Besides her medical degree, she also has a degree in Theology.

Dr. Sesé returned to Barcelona this summer to share with family members the joy she has experienced in placing her life and profession at the service of the most needy.

### What brought you to Kinshasa nine years ago?

Monkole Hospital, an apostolic work begun by members of Opus Dei, invited me to join its staff in 2001. Little by little Monkole has become a medical center that is a model for the entire country. I arrived when the hospital's growth required more doctors, not only to care for patients, but also to teach the local students. I was asked to start a department of internal medicine.

### When you decided to move to Africa, weren't you already well established in a private hospital in the Canary Islands?



Yes, that's true, but at the same time I was eager to help out in a place without as many resources, and I was well aware of the enormous need there is in Africa for

medical care. I was also drawn by the possibility of taking up a teaching position, since I think that teaching is one of the best contributions one can make to this continent. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is still suffering from the terrible aftermaths of a civil war, especially in the areas of education and health care. The position I was offered combined these two components that are so important for the development of any country.

### What role does your faith play in this African “adventure”?

If it weren't for my faith and the Christian life that I try to lead, the offer to use my profession in the service of those most in need might not have been so attractive. During these nine years, I've tried to live alongside the people of Kinshasa, and I must confess that I've found it very enjoyable. The people here are very warm, and the environment is more favorable to human relationships, with less rushing around and competition.

### After being away for so long, aren't you a bit anxious to return to Spain?



Right now, no. Monkole still has many needs, especially with the way it has expanded since it began in 1991 as a small clinic in the Mongafula district of Kinshasa. In its first years the emphasis was on children and pregnant women; now the hospital has added pediatrics, internal medicine, surgery, and other services. It has also made a large investment in teaching and formation, and has begun preventive medicine programs in schools distant from

the hospital. At present, a new wing with 150 beds is about to open. Other major goals include a blood bank, something that is absolutely necessary due to the prevalent diseases there, especially among children, and resources for the early diagnosis of the HIV virus. It is so clear to those of us who work in Monkole that what is essential is not just providing prompt medical care, but also personal attention, accompanying people so they never feel alone.

### How does a member of Opus Dei live her faith in the midst of people who are so demonstrative and expressive as the African Church?

You learn to adapt to it. True, the people express their faith in external gestures, through music and dance, and that is fine, so long as it doesn't impede the more interior dimension of the faith. My experience is that we are mutually enriched and the interchange of traditions and outlooks helps all of us to grow in our faith.



Neighborhood near Monkole

## Professional Basketball: Living the High Life?

It was 2004. With only 16 seconds left in our game against Real Madrid the coach finally noticed me. I was 19 at the time and more than a little nervous . . .

August 31, 2010



So I took a deep breath, peeled off my sweatshirt and ran onto the court. Someone passes me the ball near the sidelines. A fake, and I dribble towards the hoop. But the Real Madrid center crashes into me. Mama mia, how that hurt! A personal foul. Two free throws. They both go in. Whew! I relax as the buzzer sounds. The game's over. I glance up at the scoreboard. What a beating they've given us! But if my grandfather Enrique, who used to drive me to my games, could see me now, how happy he would be....

Well at least my first game as a guard on the CB de Granada team is over. But I still don't know if my dream of playing in the first division will become a reality. I tell myself "Be careful, don't let this go to your head." I gather up my gear and get onto the bus. The people passing by look up at us as though we were important. They seem to be saying: "Look at those tall guys.... they must be living the high life!"

But no. Our life is not all that remarkable. We are brought back to reality when we try to get our legs comfortable on the bus. My problem is small compared with the team center, who at six foot eleven has to scrunch his legs between the seats. The truth is that, at six foot three, I don't stand out among my teammates.

On the bus some foolish thoughts start running through my head: "You've just played against Real Madrid, and now all the girls will adore you and you'll be famous." So I turn my thoughts back to that game when I was just starting out as a basketball player.



I remember it quite well. There was a lot of tension in the stands. Parents were yelling, children running around and the coach shouting on the sideline. I was on the bench, watching a boy who seemed to be playing defense without much intensity. Losing my temper, I shouted out, annoyed at his laziness: "But you're useless out there!" In the stands, a girl jumped up: "What do you mean useless? That boy isn't bad at all. Have you really been watching?" Surprised, I couldn't think of anything to say to her. Since I've never liked arguments. I sank down on the bench while my face turned red.



A number of games went by. At the age of 14, I was named the outstanding player in Granada and I went to collect the prize. I was very nervous... and very happy. As were my parents. As I came down from the stage, that same girl appeared again. "Well, well, And you're the one they gave the prize to? Oh, well..." Two things were clear: that I was turning red again, and that that girl . . . had character.

It turned out that Julia (the name of that strong and decisive girl) also played basketball (in fact, better than I did). Over time we got to know one another quite well, due to our shared interests, and in the end I fell in love and we were engaged. Meanwhile, my life was becoming quite hectic. I made a trip throughout the U.S.A. Back in Spain, I decided to start studying business, combining this with many hours of training and traveling to different cities. My coach advised me: "Calm down Gonzalo. Take your time. Practice once a day and go to your classes. This is a long road and you've just begun it."



At that point in time, I thought crises in sports were something personal, that one had to be strong alone... But Julia's mother taught me a lot when she became sick and died of cancer: we live for others, both in suffering and in joy. We aren't born or die alone.

I kept asking myself "How is it possible for my fiancée's mother to accept the suffering



each day brings her with such joy.” I couldn’t understand it. In her sickness, Julia’s mother lived the “God of little things.” It was there in her smile, her welcoming presence. I don’t know how to explain it. It’s easy and hard to put into words....

Eventually I came to realize that it was the Christian spirit of Opus Dei that she reflected. For me, God was only present at Sunday Mass and in the big moments of my life: when the ball went into the basket, when we won the game.... And there, in that home, with my bedridden future mother-in-law, I discovered that, even if you are tall and strong, God is with you because you are a small and needy child.



So now, I too am in Opus Dei, and I am trying to carry out my coach’s advice in little things, and in others as important as getting to daily Mass or having married, a month ago, that girl with character.

I’m now 24, and no longer have tattoos on my arms, but my sneakers have printed on them the words “All for you.” It was there even before I got married. I use it to explain to my teammates that we are playing another game with much higher stakes: the championship of eternal Life.

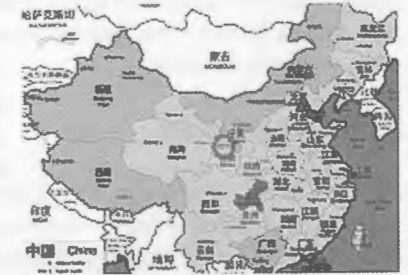
In the end I know that life has its ups and downs...but we have a God who became man for us 2000 years ago, and who I now try to stay close to, while continuing to enjoy traveling with the team on the bus, listening to music, celebrating victories.... And oh! Since I’ve been in the Work, whenever I’m on the court, I look for a guardian angel sitting in the stands, with his legs crossed and holding a banner saying: “Still enjoying the game, and enjoying Life. Your grandfather, Enrique... who is with God.”

## Surprised by God

**Celina, a 23-year-old Chinese, is studying to be a concert pianist in Austria. After suffering a personal tragedy, she found new friends, and the path to God, in a student residence in Vienna.**

2010/04/13

When I came to Europe in 2003 from Lanzhou in the Peoples Republic of China, I didn’t suspect that this would not only lead to important developments in my professional life, but that my life as a whole would also change.



### A dream comes true: Vienna

Practicing the piano—up to thirteen hours each day! That’s how my life was, and the lives of many other young Chinese who wanted to pursue a musical career. My goal was a high one: I wanted to win a musical competition whose prize was studying in Vienna at the Conservatory of Music. And I succeeded! I was awarded a ticket to the “City of Music,” along with my boy friend at the time, a very talented flutist. We had even more serious plans for a future together and were thinking about marriage.

But that was not to be. When we were back in China for a vacation visit, he died in an auto accident. It was a great shock to me. But God’s ways are often not easy to understand at first. I still remember the advice that some Christian friends of my mother gave me: “Keep your faith in God.” But I was not baptized myself.

### Währing — a new home

When I returned to Vienna I looked for a place to stay and found a room in the Währing student residence for women, run by people of Opus Dei. That was a great good fortune for me. Here I found strong support in my music studies, while also coming to realize that the whole meaning of my life couldn’t be my professional career. Practicing all day long and giving concerts couldn’t be all that there was to life.



The death of my boy friend led me to ask myself many questions. I had begun seeking for and struggling with God. My confrontation with death brought me slowly back to life! Together with my friends in the residence I went on excursions, I learned German, we looked after the garden and the house... and I no longer needed to practice grimly for thirteen hours a day. The way was a long one. I had to give up old habits. I stopped consulting horoscopes in search of my future, and decided to take my life into my own hands, and with God's help lead it along the right path. I grew in my trust in God, who was always there for me and for whom I tried to make every practice session into a gala concert in his honor.

### A deep joy and peace

I wanted to learn more about the Catholic faith, and in the residence I received answers to my questions. After a thorough preparation and examination of the Catholic faith and its way of life, I was baptized in the residence chapel during the 2005 Easter Vigil. Everyone helped me with the preparations. We went together to find the Baptismal candle and the white dress, and also a pair of earrings. I wear these earrings at every concert as a remembrance of the most important moment in my life. A great faith and joy flooded into my soul. And a deep peace entered my life.



*Celina at her baptism.*

Meanwhile I am studying with a professor in Linz. I know that my new life in the faith has to be renewed every day. To find Christ in my daily life I read the Gospel, spend some moments in dialogue with God, and go to the sacraments regularly. In Linz I meet with some friends from Opus Dei, to find encouragement for a consistent life of faith. The motto for my new life is: God is a sure help!