

Record: 1

Title: Finding Sanctity in All Tasks. (cover story)

Authors: Miranda, Carolina A.
Scully, Sean

Source: Time Canada; 4/24/2006, Vol. 167 Issue 17, p40-41, 2p, 1 color

Document Type: Article

Subject Terms: OPUS Dei (Society)
CATHOLICS

Company/Entity: OPUS Dei (Society)

Reviews & Products: DA Vinci Code, The (Book)

People: AGBIM, Silas
BROWN, Dan

Abstract: The article reports on Silas Agbim, a member of Catholic organization Opus Dei, who shares his first name with a murderous albino character in Dan Brown's best seller "The Da Vinci Code." Agbim doesn't mind the notoriety the organization has gotten from the upcoming film adaptation of the book, as it gives more people a chance to learn about the real Opus Dei.

Full Text Word Count: 398

ISSN: 0315-8446

Accession Number: 20636883

Database: Business Source Premier

Section: COVER
RELIGION

Finding Sanctity in All Tasks

NGOZI & SILAS AGBIM

Although he shares the same first name and is also associated with Opus Dei, Silas Agbim couldn't be more different from the fanatical albino monk who goes on an international murder spree in the book *The Da Vinci Code*. Agbim is a slight, unassuming Nigerian immigrant in his 60s who lives quietly in Brooklyn, N.Y., with his wife Ngozi. But as the release of *The Da Vinci Code* film version approaches, the Agbims, who have been supernumeraries--members of Opus Dei who live outside its residences--for almost 30 years, have been speaking out about their experiences in the organization. Silas (the real one) says he doesn't mind his unusually earned public profile: "I am pleased with the publicity in a way. It helps counter some of the impressions that the author of *The Da Vinci Code*, Dan Brown, was trying to portray about Opus Dei, the church and Christianity in general."

A friend told the couple about the group while they were on vacation in the Ivory Coast in the mid-1970s. Intrigued, they decided to check it out when they returned to New York and, finding it to be a "connection between the theory and the practice" of their Catholic faith, joined a few years later. A stockbroker, Silas says the organization has helped him find a way to bring his faith into his professional life. Every workaday task becomes an opportunity to impress God. "You don't just buy [a stock] because it's on the buying list," he says. "You have to do independent research. You have to be sure that this is someplace you would put your [own] money. Your conscience is being touched."

Ngozi, a retired college professor also in her 60s, applies the same approach to the charitable works she says her affiliation with Opus Dei has inspired her to take on. Recently she initiated a book-collection project for a library in Nigeria. "We're not sending trashy things," she explains. "We got 1,500 solid books." The Agbims say this type of focus has helped bring them closer to God. "You are not a monk," says Silas. "It is in the workplace that God expects you to show him your skills, to do your bit and serve him."

PHOTO (COLOR)

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By Carolina A. Miranda

Reported by Sean Scully

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