

Bundle of Miracles

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My name is Linoy. My father died when I was fifteen years old. As a young Hindu teen, I had to grow up quickly, to be the “Dad” of the home and to care for my mother and two sisters.

At nineteen, I moved to New Delhi to work in computing and support my family back in Kerala. My older sister had already moved to Delhi and had become a Catholic. When I arrived, she gave me a Bible and told me I should read it.

Before I knew it, the scenes on some of those pages came to life in front of me. Walking through the streets of India's capital brought me face to face with lepers, begging on the steps of the Catholic Cathedral. Before long, with the support of the friends I was staying with, I found myself bringing those lepers food and good company. This is where the "bundle of miracles" began.

The friends I shared a house with left a deep mark on my life. They were single men with regular jobs in Delhi yet every day they prayed, went to Mass, and prepared a large meal each weekend for people living with

leprosy. Their example and joy prompted me to start praying and attending Mass daily as well. I even attended a retreat at a Divine Retreat Centre in Delhi. Through the grace of God, this led me to prepare for Baptism in the Catholic Church in my early twenties.

More changes followed. I secured a computing job in Dubai. While the work and pay were excellent, I found it difficult to live my faith consistently in that environment. After about eighteen months, a close friend who had travelled with me, also a Catholic, suggested that we move to Australia. It was a providential idea: my sister and her husband had recently settled in Sydney, something my friend didn't even know. To qualify for permanent residency, I had to change careers, so I decided to retrain as a baker.

And just like in Delhi, I found myself in a share house with Catholics. The bundles of miracles followed me across the continents. I met the love of my life and we were married. Soon another bundle arrived - our first son.

One day a friend I met at that share house asked me to come to an evening of recollection, and I can only remember one line from the talk, given by a married supernumerary of Opus Dei - “Love your wife as a gift from God.” Nothing could be more true. It was a 40-minute commute to this recollection, but those words from that good husband drew me back despite all the other things happening in my life. Back then, we were living in the south-west of Sydney and my work as a baker started at 1am in the city.

I started seeing someone for spiritual advice and really enjoyed the idea of offering up small things at work for special intentions. I'm in charge of baking all the bread at the bakery. The hardest part of my shift is unloading the freshly baked tins from the 230-degree oven and getting them ready for packaging. I do this three times a day, and it needs to be done quickly and carefully, otherwise the loaves shrink. As I work, I offer the preparation of each loaf for a particular intention, praying for my wife, my boys, and for other family members and friends.

Listening to the questions at the recollections was like holding up a mirror to my soul. What is going on inside? What needs to change?

Apart from interior change, I also needed another change. Now, with my second son already about nine

years old and life even busier, I decided we needed to move closer to a centre of Opus Dei. Moving from Delhi to Western Sydney had its challenges but so did moving 40 minutes away in an area bursting with an influx of people and soaring house prices.

I started praying through the intercession of Blessed Álvaro del Portillo, former Prelate of Opus Dei, asking him to help us find a house. The next bundle was soon on its way - my wife found a new job in the area, my two sons were accepted into a nearby school of the Pared Foundation, and we found an affordable house close by. Thank you, Blessed Alvaro!

And the bundles have also been delivered back home. I translated the prayer card of St Josemaria into Malayalam and sent it to Kerala. My family tells me that they and their

friends have received dozens of favours already.

Now I am a supernumerary member of Opus Dei, and so I have had to learn how to spread out my plan of spiritual life throughout the day, without bundling them together too much! I've had to be creative, as my workday now begins at 3am and I split my sleep in two so that I can share home duties with my wife. But it is all worthwhile. I've started to have some interesting chats at work with my coworkers and some of the young students we employ as junior bakers. I am so impressed with their virtues and their openness to talk about faith.

When I look back on these blessings, I realise my role is so simple and small, but somehow also very crucial in God's mind and his plan. All I have to do is my little bit, and hopefully not drop my bundle.

I still think often about those words at that first recollection - “love your wife as a gift,” and that advice: “offer up your work.” They are such simple messages I try to pass on to my colleagues at work. Hopefully they soon have their own bundles of miracles.

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