

## God Smiles On Kiev

Yuri lives in Kiev (Ukraine) with his wife and daughter. He was baptized seven years ago. Soon after becoming a Catholic he met Opus Dei, which he says was another "big discovery."

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I was born in Russia, in Siberia, thirty-five years ago. For the past three years I have lived in Kiev, Ukraine, with my wife and daughter. I work as a consultant and CFO in several companies.

Seven years ago I was baptized. One idea I had very clear then: I didn't want to be just a "Sunday Catholic." I wanted to know more about God and I read many books about my new religion. Gradually I discovered new facets of God's Mercy, Love and Justice. I sensed God was calling me to something, but I couldn't find an answer.

One day a friend told me: "How safe you must feel in church, sheltered from all the suffering and confusion outside." His words provoked in me a strong reaction. That's precisely what I didn't want to do: seek refuge in my faith and shut myself off from others. I wanted to share my new faith with my family and friends and strive to make the world better

The first time I heard about Opus Dei was in the context of a lot of confused ideas. I went to the Opus Dei website and sent a request for

information. I received a quick reply, and a few days later someone from Kiev called and offered to explain the Work to me. He also gave me a copy of *The Way*.

Reading the book was a great discovery and brought answers to many of my questions. I also began to see what God was calling me to. He is calling me to sanctify my daily work, to offer it to him and put care into the small details. He wants me to serve my family and friends, to try to bring them to God by bringing God's love to them, doing so with joy and simplicity—two words that I have come to like a lot.

When I recall the moment of this big “discovery” of mine, I like to imagine God looking at me and smiling.

Since we have no center in Ukraine yet, I visited the center of the Work in Moscow. I was very moved when the person who met me at the door

showed me to the chapel, where we knelt for a few moments before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Now each month a number of us get together in Kiev to receive Christian formation and personal spiritual direction.

The most beautiful Catholic Church in Kiev is St. Nicholas Cathedral. When my new friends from the center of the Work in Moscow first came to visit me, I showed it to them. When we entered the church we saw an image of our Lady on the wall of the vestibule. We said a brief prayer, addressing Holy Mary as our Mother.

I have come to see that Opus Dei is actually a family. A very big family united around the Holy Family...and that now includes my own family. Opus Dei has helped me to understand that God is my Father, who loves me with an infinite Love.

Each morning I tell Him: Here I am, Lord. Now I know what you want from me.

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