

"You're in great form Granny"

I am 82 years of age and have 8 children, 25 grandchildren and 2 great grand children. I have been a supernumerary for over 30 years and I give thanks to God every day for my own vocation to Opus Dei, and for that of two of my children.

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Like most people, I have experienced great joys and sorrows in my life. I'm grateful to God because they have brought me so much closer to Him.

My vocation to Opus Dei has helped me see that being a mother and grandmother is one of the most important tasks in this world. We mothers need to have a strong faith in order to pass this faith on to the next generations.

Sometimes my grandchildren say to me 'You're always happy Granny, why?' I have always replied, 'Because I love God and God loves me'. Now they say 'You're in great form Granny' and before I can say anything they reply 'Yes we know. It's because you love God and He loves you'!

My husband, who died a number of years ago, had a drink problem which was very difficult for all of us. For a period of time after I joined Opus Dei he did not really understand my vocation and sometimes made it difficult for me to attend talks and retreats. I entrusted

this difficulty to Saint Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei.

As my husband got to know St. Josemaría, bit by bit he began to change. He met a priest of the Work who explained things to him and soon he became a co-operator. On occasions, if he went to bed without having said the prayer card to St. Josemaría, he would get up again exclaiming 'Oh I have to get up and say that prayer card'.

On one occasion I overheard him say 'St. Josemaría, you never leave me alone' as if in jest. I think St. Josemaria was 'nagging' him to pray. I think that our devotion to St. Josemaria helped our marriage. It got to the stage where we were doing many acts of piety together. He would ask me 'Have you done your visit today?' (Referring to the visit to the Blessed Sacrament) and

eventually he would say 'When are we going to say the Rosary?'

In the final hours of his life he was in intensive care. The doctors needed to put him on a ventilator but, before they did, he asked me to find the prayer card of St. Josemaría in his pyjamas pocket and place it where he could see it. I put it on the wall in front of him.

Opus Dei has helped me (as it helped my husband) to get closer to God; to make Him the most important person in my life no matter what happens. I know that God loves me and will look after me. Opus Dei is my help towards heaven. My love for it started over thirty years ago and it continues to grow day by day.

I have learned how to really pray; I look forward to the two half hours of mental prayer that I do each day and which is part of the life of everyone in Opus Dei. I try to go to a church

where I can be face to face with Our Lord in the Tabernacle. I feel so close to him there. Of course I have my dry days where He doesn't seem so close, although my faith tells me He is.

Then I will tell Our Lord, 'Sorry, Lord, I don't seem to be able to be close to You today'.

Other days I am almost overawed by the realisation that He is looking at me and loving me. And He always brings Our Lady close to us. It seems as though He's saying 'You know my mother is here and she loves you too. If you want to get close to Me you'll have to get close to her also'.

Opus Dei has taught me that I can be a saint right here in my own house, in the kitchen, in the garden. I can love God in the smallest things of my day: closing a door properly, tidying the house; these can all be offered to Him. It's so simple and yet so profound. It's a message I try to

spread around as much as I can, starting with my family and friends.

I give thanks every day for my vocation to Opus Dei and I will continue trying to pass on Opus Dei's message. And that message? *YOU* can be a saint wherever you are.

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