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Reading Saint Josemaria in Hong Kong

Lucia, a young mother and former bank executive in Hong Kong, has organized numerous book sales for the writings of Saint Josemaría at parishes all around the city.

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Here in Hong Kong we wanted to help more people to get to know St. Josemaría and Opus Dei. So we decided to offer people the chance to

read the books of St. Josemaría in Chinese.

The diocese of Hong Kong has declared this year the *Year of the Laity*, and we thought that book sales at parishes would help lay Catholics read more spiritual books, in particular, the books written by St. Josemaría. These books have been an inspiration for me, and I have always thought they should be best-sellers at book shops and can benefit all the Catholics of Hong Kong as well.

The first book sale took place on January 9, 2011, a date chosen by the parish priest. I learned only later that this date is the birthday of St. Josemaría. What a wonderful coincidence! Since then, we have had many more book sales.

From my experience, each book sale is slightly different. I must say that I learned a lot from these experiences. Each time I went to a parish church

for a book sale, I would visit the tabernacle and say a little prayer and ask St. Josemaría to intercede for us.

Some parishioners would ask me to recommend books for their spiritual reading. Some would buy them as gifts for their friends, their children or for special occasions, such as baptisms, as there are quite a number of adult baptisms here. For the kids, the book ‘Yes’ is the most popular, and for younger kids, the comic book about St. Josemaría seems appealing. In some parishes, the *Way of the Cross* is popular, while in other places, the books on parenting sell more.

Nevertheless, we always find that *The Way* is a “best-seller” in many parishes. And personally I find *The Way* easy to sell. I just need to mention the millions of copies that have been sold and that the book has been translated into 37 languages.

These facts usually quickly result in a sale.

The customers also spend time in sharing their experiences with us. Quite a few tell us that they have a lot of spiritual books at home, but they don't have time to read them. Doesn't this sound familiar? Other customers told us that they found spiritual books very boring. Well, I have encountered this before, because some books really are "heavy" and not that easy for a lay person to swallow. We hope to have more books that are 'user-friendly.' That is why we try to provide these books through Spring Publications.

Some customers ask us questions about Opus Dei and our founder. A few ask about the dates of retreats and about the doctrine classes. I am more than happy to respond to all these questions.

I also see the enthusiasm of those who volunteer to help us in the sales booth. The volunteers are faithful of the Prelature of Opus Dei, or cooperators or other friends. I can see that they are eager to help, and they often offer to speak to priests of other parishes in order for us to hold book sales there.

Through this initiative, people have been brought closer together. One customer told us that she posted on her Facebook account the books that she bought and a few friends ordered some of them through her. We are thrilled to hear about such requests, knowing that the sale does not end there, but continues as more people read the books through their friends.

I guess it is like what St. Josemaría said in *The Way* (point no. 831): we are like the stone that falls into the lake and that “produces a first

ripple ... and then another and another ... each time wider.”

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