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## **Refuelling my bike and my soul**

Nicholas Patankar was born in Goa and now lives in Mumbai, where he completed his Bachelors in Commerce and currently works as a financial analyst. He is a Cooperator of Opus Dei. Since when? Why? Let him answer.

I came to know about Opus Dei through my dear mother, from whom I learned how to practice my faith. Even before Opus Dei came to Mumbai, in 2001, she already knew it very well for many years and would speak to me about the Work and its founder, St. Josemaría Escrivá.

Though I definitely liked what she used to tell me I have to confess that as a child I didn't understand much about it. But later on, when I was already 16, I remember that on a Sunday afternoon I asked my mother to take me for the first time to a Centre of Opus Dei.

And together we went by train all the way from Marol (Andheri East) to Bandra. Since then I started to participate in some of the cultural, social, spiritual and academic activities there. Seven years later I became a Cooperator of Opus Dei.

Being a Catholic, the message of Opus Dei really encourages me to put into practice the teachings of Jesus Christ applying the Gospel to my daily life at home or in the office, when I am in the church or riding my bike on the road, dealing with my relatives and friends or with my clients and colleagues.

I like to think like this: the same way my motorbike needs fuel to run, my soul needs fuel to live, it needs to be nourished. I get the depth and correct understanding of the teachings of the Church through the ages at the means of formation I receive from the Prelature: classes, talks, retreats, spiritual guidance, etc.

I also get to keep my life in the right bearings so that I do not go adrift in the mayhem of living in this chaotic world. I have to say that thanks to the classes on the doctrine of the Catholic Church that I regularly receive in the activities organized by the Work I have come to know much better my faith and understand with more depth what I believe in.

Now I find the answers to many of the questions and doubts that I had earlier. Because religion is part of one's life, sometimes in my interaction with my friends I am

happy when I have the opportunity to explain my faith to them when I am asked to do so.

Apart from that I also take part in teaching catechism to Catholic kids in an orphanage run by the Archdiocese of Bombay.

I am personally fond of this activity because as a child my father, who passed away when I was 13 years old, took great pains in giving me the right formation.

Through this activity in the orphanage I see that I can give back that same understanding, knowledge and character to these children who lack the fostering that I received.

Nicholas Patankar

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