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# **A nine-month journey. A master's degree. A baby.**

Blessed Alvaro del Portillo has brought us more than one joy, one after another. Thank you, Don Alvaro!

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I should have written up Don Alvaro's favour (favours, actually) some time ago. I owed it to him. I married Nazareth in Argentina in March 2012. Full of happiness, we went on our honeymoon. A few days

after returning, we had some of the best news: we were going to be parents! However, that immense joy was tinged with darkness, because a few weeks later we lost the pregnancy.

It was a very hard blow. The following year, she got pregnant again... and we lost it again.

In January 2014 we went on a trip to Europe for a couple of weeks.

When we were in Rome, I received an email from my father, who told us that the beatification of Don Alvaro had been announced. Walking around Rome, although we were a little late and it was winter, but I suggested to my wife that we go and visit Our Lady of Peace, the prelatric church in whose crypt Don Alvaro is buried. We were praying for our intention and I noticed that they were beginning to place candelabras on the altar. Solemn Benediction was

about to begin. Minutes later, we were able to attend Benediction presided over by the then Father, Don Javier. After the Benediction, we went down the stairs of the church to leave. To our surprise, the Father was praying at the tomb of Don Alvaro. We waited at the side and were able to greet him and ask him to pray for our intention. He also said to us "You are kids" (not so much now) while he affectionately tapped my face with the palm of his hand, and told us that he was going to pray for us and recommended that we make a medical consultation. We were already doing so.

My wife was eventually diagnosed with a blood problem, so for pregnancies she had to take heparin injections.

On the other hand, I don't know why, but in 2002, when several friends had told me about their experiences

of St Josemaría's canonisation, I said to myself that I wasn't going to miss Don Alvaro's beatification. Although, having paid for the trip to Europe months earlier, it was going to be difficult to be able to return that same year and be present at the beatification.

We began to pray especially to Don Alvaro for our intention. A month later, I applied for a scholarship from the Carolina Foundation to do a Masters in Constitutional Law. After entrusting this intention to Don Alvaro as well, in June, I found out that I had won one of the places. The course began in early October 2014 and ended on 20 June 2015. Despite the fact that the Foundation usually issues tickets to Spain only a few days before the start of the course, my flight was scheduled for 20 September.

Seven days later, with my wife (and my parents) I was at the beatification. Needless to say, we especially entrusted our intention to him. And needless to say, Don Alvaro was extremely effective. A few days later, we were expecting our daughter! She was born on 18 June in Madrid. As my wife has dual nationality, she is Argentine and Italian, but born in Spain; we will have to sort out all that!

In nine months: A scholarship. A Master's degree. A baby. Thank you, Don Alvaro!

J. S. Y. - Argentina

Picture: Sebastián León Prado - Unsplash

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