

St. Josemaria helps me as a seminarian

I am a seminarian in third year theology, in the seventh year of priestly formation. The basic idea about the seminary revolves round prayer life, intense study and hard work. For a long time as a seminarian I used to wonder how to reconcile Prayer life (life of holiness) and intense study.

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I was made to understand that if one wanted to get a first class degree in

theology (Summa Cum Laude) then such a person ought to spend a lot of time in the Library. Equally, I was also made to understand that if one wanted to get a 'first class' in Holiness then he would have to spend more time in the chapel. And for some moments it was hard for me to balance the two.

However, it was only after being exposed to his writings that it became clear for me how to balance between the two. St Josemaría Escrivá says that "*an hour of study is equivalent to an hour of prayer.*" (The Way 335). This was a completely new discovery for me. It meant that if I studied well, if I studied seriously, then that study can be offered to God as a prayer. It also gave me a new aim for studying, While previously I studied merely to do well in exams... to get good grades...to acquire some knowledge here and there...with this maxim of St. Josemaría, it also means

that by taking my studies seriously I also please God.

This being the case therefore, I can understand why St. Josemaría says *there is no excuse for one who should be a scholar and is not.* (The Way, 332). This aspect also opened up my prayer life. Prayer time is no longer de-linked from my studies.

At prayer, especially during the morning adoration before the Blessed Sacrament,, besides praying for the needs of the Pope, the Bishop, the Seminary rector, my parish priest...I also have time to ask God to enlighten my studies. For instance, if the Hebrew language is becoming too difficult, I ask to Lord to intervene, and then when I go to study...things begin to take shape.

Finally, in one of his Videos in South America, St. Josemaría told an audience, that "*the faithful of Opus Dei should have time for everything.*"

This has particularly influenced my attitude towards the seminary schedule. If it is time for sports, I go for sports. If it is time for manual labour, I go for manual labour... without omitting any seminary activity. And in this way, I have ended up avoiding any problems with the Seminary superiors.

It is my hope that many other seminarians, will find in St. Josemaría, a wonderful guide and father in their journey of discernment. May St. Josemaría Escrivá, the Saint of ordinary life, watch over all diocesan seminarians in the world.

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