

I resolved to smile more

Interview with Roger Bissonnette, car mechanic and school bus driver, Besner & Bissonnette Inc. He is married with two adult children.

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How and when did you come to know about Saint Josemaria?

My daughter became a member of the Work in 1980, and my wife followed a few years later. They attended activities for ladies at the

Manoir de Beaujeu. I had been a mechanic with my own garage for many years and I attended Mass regularly every Sunday. My wife was involved in the parish, particularly with the catechism of the altar boys. I practiced, but it never occurred to me that a layman like me could strive after sanctity. That, I thought was only for priests and nuns. But when my wife had me read some of the homilies of Saint Josemaria, I found out that I too could be a saint. This was new to me.

What impact did the teachings of Saint Josemaria have on your work?

Well I had always offered my work to God, as this is what I had been taught at school and by my parents. But after knowing more about the life of Saint Josemaria, I got more specific, and I offered my work for the people in my apostolate, for my family, my

co-workers, my friends. I had the habit of swearing occasionally when something went wrong, but now I realised I had to give a good example, so I changed that... Like in many garages around here we used to have certain inappropriate calendars on the wall. I realised that they had to go, so I took them down and placed a prayer card of our Founder instead. It helped to keep presence of God and was occasionally a subject of conversation with customers.

What other characteristic were you struck by in Saint Josemaria?

One thing that struck me in those filmed get-togethers is that he was always cheerful, with a radiant and contagious smile. Then I noticed that all the members of the Work always wore authentic smiles. So I resolved to smile more too, regardless of the snags and setbacks I might encounter in the garage. A friend came to me

once and asked me how come I was never in a bad mood... I didn't quite know what to tell him. So I told him I learned this from our Father.

Hearing Saint Josemaria speak made me think and be more reflective. My wife even says my character got smoother, with less of those hard edges.

At first I must admit that it was not easy to put into practice all the things I was learning. It was pretty tough to smooth away those hard edges, but then I was told that I should always have an attitude of beginning and beginning again, and I learned that God was a loving Father who loves us always despite our weaknesses.
