

## **"Montse loved basketball and spread joy"**

Pope Francis declared Montse Grases “venerable” one year ago. During a recent commemorative meeting in Rome, a number of people confirmed that her beatification process is continuing to make progress.

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One of those attending the Rome meeting, María Eugenia Ossandón, a

theologian and historian who works in the Saint Josemaria Historical Institute, said that “Montse was a person who if someone said ‘look, would you like to do this?’ she would say yes because it was a way to accompany that friend of hers and to make her happy by doing what that person liked.”

Montse liked basketball, tennis, music, dancing and theater, and had many friends. Together with her friends, she gave catechism classes to poor children and brought them toys and sweets.

Those who knew her say that she was a very happy girl, who spread a contagious joy even in the most painful moments of the terminal cancer that in 1959 caused her premature death.

Francesco Russo, who works in the Prelature of Opus Dei's Causes of Saints, said that “Montse is a very

attractive figure because she is a girl who had many friends and whom others found it easy to like, and who had many good qualities.”

In 1954 she met Opus Dei, and little by little she realized that God was calling her to this path in the Church. She was filled with hope in the future and wanted to follow God closely amid the ordinary activities of her daily life. When she was diagnosed in 1959 with the bone cancer in her leg that would lead to her death, she never gave way to pessimism, despite the fact that, as Ossandón recalled, “Once when someone asked her how badly her leg ached, Montse responded: ‘it feels like a vicious dog is biting my knee and won’t let go.’”

José Luis Gutierrez, the postulator for the canonization cause of Montse Grases, said: “What does Montse teach us? That in her daily life she learned how to love God’s will and to

abandon herself in his hands, so that when the cancer came, she was ready to accept it. But rather than seeing her illness as a sudden special grace, I think people should focus on her previous life, when she was with her companions, with her friends, when she went on excursions with them.”

Devotion to Montse has spread to many countries. In 2014, more than 40,000 prayer cards were printed, including in such languages as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Tagalog. By the witness of her life, Montse reminds us that we can find God and draw close to him in our ordinary life, in our family and work.

A longer video about her life is found below:

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