My vocation is a wonderful gift

Adrienne Treleaven explains how she met Opus Dei and discovered her vocation as an assistant numerary.

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I was very shy when I first came into contact with Opus Dei. I applied to do a course in Hospitality at Lakefield, a college in London. My parents allowed me to go even though financially it was quite a burden for them. The main reason they were willing for me to go was the fact that

I would be in a Catholic environment and able to attend Mass on a regular basis. Little did I expect how much I would come to know my faith more deeply and the effect it would have on my decision about my life.

I spent two years training in the theory and practice of Household Management gaining my qualifications in Hospitality.

During these years of training, what attracted me most was the family atmosphere, the warmth, the care and the love that the people of Opus Dei showed to everyone. It was not long before I realised I had found what was going to make me happy. I remember saying to myself one day "this is what I want to do, this is for me". God was giving me a vocation to Opus Dei as an assistant numerary.

So why am I happy?...to give oneself in whatever capacity is very rewarding: it gives you an inner joy

that no one and nothing can take from you. Knowing that I have in my hands – what I do and how I do it – the possibility of passing on to others the love that God has for each person. This profession, for that is what it is, is a very special way of serving one's family and the wider community. One learns that in serving one receives more than one gives and so this is a wonderful experience even from a purely human point of view. Throughout the day I often remind myself that I am doing the same work that Our Lady did and moreover I receive a salary for doing a job I enjoy immensely.

What being an assistant numerary involves

I see myself as a mother of a family with all that it entails... for me it was and continues to be the most natural thing in the world to take care of the work of the home. A scene from the

gospel which relates the life in Bethany where Mary and Martha tried to serve Our Lord in different ways is precisely the manner in which I try to live my life. I try to do each task with the greatest care possible so that I can offer it to Our Lord, learning to pray during my work and seeing the value of little things. I take the opportunity to offer my work for the needs of my family and friends and this gives me an added motive for doing it with greater care and love. My mother has told me on many occasions that I am the person in the family she contacts first when she needs to share some family difficulty.

I am extremely happy with the opportunity of giving what I have received in Opus Dei to many others, both young and not so young. Regularly I give advice to young girls on different home skills which are necessary for their future life. At

other times mothers ask my help in dealing with one or other of their children or in organising their own homes.

I also help in giving doctrinal classes and spiritual guidance to girls of all ages, some who are preparing to receive one of the sacraments, others want to deepen in their knowledge of the faith, and others who are learning about the Catholic faith for the first time.

In my moments of chilling out I like to read novels especially murder mysteries, watching films –one of my favourites is *North and South* – and card making for all occasions. I have recently made the wedding invites for one of my cousins and since then have been asked by others to do similar projects. I enjoy visits to the coast and especially, weather permitting, swimming in the sea.

All in all I think that this is the most wonderful gift that I have received, and I pray that many others will also discover their vocation as an assistant numerary.

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