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# **“Why don’t we join Opus Dei?”: the joke that changed our lives**

Joshua and Danica rediscovered their faith thanks to an off-hand comment. What began as a casual, throwaway remark became the starting point of a life shaped by a deeper decision: to seek God in everyday life. This is their story.

12/01/2025

## **A period of spiritual dryness**

“We went for a month without going to Mass, without doing anything. And it was a joke. I said: ‘Why don’t we join Opus Dei?’”

That question changed their lives.

Joshua and Danica live in Guatemala. They met in 2007 on Hi5, a social network that has since disappeared. “It seems like God wanted us to meet that way,” they say.

After the pandemic, they drifted away from God, until Danica said, “We can’t go on like this; we have to do something. God is calling us to something.”

But to what? That was when Joshua, laughing, suggested Opus Dei.

They didn’t know anything about the Work, other than that other people thought they were already part of it.

So they said, “Why don't we see what it's like? Obviously we're going to fit in well.”

## **An adventure from the very beginning**

“A few days after our first online conversation,” Danica says, “he asked me out ,and I said yes. That evening he asked me to marry him, and I thought it was a joke, so I started laughing and didn't pay much attention, but at the end of the week, after talking to my parents, Joshua asked me again to marry him.”

Joshua wasn't Catholic, but he started going to Mass with Danica at her parents' request.

“Everyone thought we were crazy, that our marriage wouldn't last. They told us we'd be divorced in a year.”

Crazy or not, they got married, and they're here almost 20 years later.

## **A website, a phone number, and an address**

They lived in the United States for a few years, and their two eldest were born there. After that, they felt that God was calling them back to Guatemala.

Then the pandemic came. They fell away from their faith somewhat, but they felt “an emptiness, a search for something more.”

Danica searched for “Opus Dei” online and found contact information. They sent an email saying that they were a Catholic family and waited to hear back.

“When people asked us who brought us to Opus Dei,” they say, “we tell

them, ‘Saint Josemaría and the Holy Spirit.’ We didn’t know anyone.”

## **“Sometimes it seems like having a family is impossible”**

Joshua and Danica have seven children. It isn’t always easy, but they say that the joy of family life makes the difficulties worthwhile.

“We’re bombarded with ideas about what it means to have a family, to the point that it almost seems impossible, like families are a burden,” Danica says. “But it doesn’t have to be all *me, me, me.*”

“Some people tell me, ‘You have many children because you’re patient,’” Danica says. “Actually, I’m not naturally a patient person, but with each child who came along, my patience has grown.”

“Because we have children and we have this family, we sanctify one another. For us, family is a vocation.”

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