Immersed in Fine Arts and God

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I first got to know Opus Dei through a friend. Driving with him one day, he suddenly asked me, “Chris do you have a plan of life?” I didn’t. Furthermore, I had never heard that phrase before. He went on to outline to me some acts of Christian piety

that made a lot of sense to me. Without any delay I put them into practice. Soon after I began to attend some of the means of formation at a centre of Opus Dei. Some years later I would ask for admission into Opus Dei as a Supernumerary.

What struck me the most about the teachings of St. Josemaría was the fact that a person can become a saint through his work. I was deeply impressed by that. I'm an artist and I'm very passionate about my work. I also tried to be a good Christian and often prayed before starting to work on a piece, but the fact that the work itself could be prayer was totally new to me. It made a lot of sense. It brought the whole ideal of sanctity down to earth for me. It was something I could relate to perfectly.

A friend of mine once told me, while watching me work on a sculpture, that the very *way* I worked was a

work of art. I often think of that phrase in a different light now. I realized that I have to work, and make that work an offerng to God. While working on any piece of art, I naturally seek to please whoever would look at it: the impression of the spectator means a lot to me.

I eventually came to see that, while I have to think about the viewer, it is even more important to know that the most important spectator of anything I'm working on is God. He can see the back of reliefs, the underneath of sculpted tables. I learnt that making the effort to perfect little details in my work, even those that nobody would see, forms an essential part of the sanctity I want to aspire to.

The Fine Arts can be very consuming. I immerse myself completely in any project I'm working on. Quite frequently, I get

carried away and can work on something for many hours at a stretch. At these times I find even minor distractions very irritating. This is another area in which the teachings of the Founder of Opus Dei have been of great benefit to me. I now know that I also have to find God in those distractions, offering up the little annoyances that these moments may cause me. Every virtue has to be lived in work, not least self-giving. Those distractions now give me something extra to offer up to God. Even though I had previously seen them as hindering my work, I now realize that by offering up these little sacrifices in my work in order to give myself to others, I am actually perfecting my work rather than harming it.

Working from an idea you have within and trying to bring it out and express it is very important in art. Well, it's also something I have

learned from the formation I have received in Opus Dei. Interior life first and then apostolate. There's really a lot that I have to be grateful to God for, not least my vocation.

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