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Local Lives, Universal Faith: Finding My Way to the Faith

This article in our local series features personal testimonies of people in the region and how the faith and the Work have impacted their lives. Cuiwen is a supernumerary from Singapore who is a convert to Catholicism. This is the story of her journey towards a true relationship with God and her vocation.

05/21/2025

Finding My Way to the Faith

In my youth, I worshipped in a Baptist church. My faith was mostly motivated by a desire to please my parents and be a good daughter. I believed that if I obeyed God, I would find Him. I got baptised in Secondary 4, but deep down, I wasn't sure I had fully accepted God into my heart. Not long after, I left the church.

Things shifted when I entered junior college and met Wei Lian. We became close friends through the art program, and she introduced me to the Catholic faith. When she joined Opus Dei, she invited me to doctrine classes and meditations. That was the first time I met Catholics who were warm, welcoming, and happy to answer my questions. Before that, I

had found the rituals and devotions of Catholicism hard to understand. But in time, I came to appreciate the richness of the faith and the beauty of the Mass.

A mission trip to Vietnam in 2013 helped me see Catholicism in action. I was struck by how the local priest knew every member of the village, how the young volunteers served joyfully, and how the daily rhythms of prayer and Mass shaped people's lives. I felt the presence of God in their simple, cheerful faith.

Mission trip in Vietnam. The man in the photo is the village priest.

After that trip, I entered the social service sector and worked in the area of mental health. A colleague invited to a Methodist church. It was then that I began to feel the desire to be closer to God. I felt accepted there and joined a year-long Bible study. It was an improvement from my first

church experience, but still, something was missing.

In 2015, I went on the Camino de Santiago with Wei Lian and a small group. I was the only non-Catholic there. At first, I walked alone to avoid feeling out of place. I was feeling uncomfortable being the only one who didn't pray the rosary or want to know the Catholic version of the stories. But on the third day, I fell very ill and had to be taken ahead by car. In that moment of weakness and frustration, I started to ask God what He wanted from me. Why had He brought me on this trip to suffer, when I wanted to spend time with Him. I decided to learn how to pray the rosary and read from *The Way* by St Josemaría Escrivá. I began to see that my distant, cautious approach to the Camino mirrored how I had been approaching God in life.

One day, I found myself praying before a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I asked God to show me the truth.

It was only when I returned to Singapore that I saw how Jesus answered my prayer. Since I was used to attending daily mass whilst I was in Spain, I decided to attend Mass at St Joseph's Church. There I heard the prayer dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus: *"Jesus, help me to love You more."* That line pierced my heart. I realised that I had always gone to God with my problems and needs, but never asked how to love Him more. That was a turning point.

I joined the RCIA programme and was fully received into the Catholic Church at Easter 2016. The journey wasn't easy. My mother was deeply upset. But with God's grace, we reconciled before she passed away in 2022.

Reception into the Catholic Church

In the years that followed, God continued to bless me. I met my husband, a former Protestant who also became Catholic in 2020. I then discovered my vocation to Opus Dei as a supernumerary whilst my husband participates in the activities of Opus Dei as a cooperator. I took part in two mission trips to Cebu before marriage and now give formation classes to cooperators.

Our young family

For my husband and me, the spiritual direction and support we've received in the Work have helped us stay grounded in our faith.

In 2023, we were blessed with our firstborn son, Gerard, and in 2025, with our daughter, Joan. The journey of parenthood has been beautiful but not without challenges, especially without my mother's presence. Joan

was born on the feast of the Assumption, exactly seven years after I accepted my vocation to Opus Dei. It felt like Our Lady was reminding me of her closeness. Her presence has given me peace and strength.

We continue to receive so many graces in family life, and I am especially grateful for the support and formation from Opus Dei, which helps us raise our children in the faith. It has shaped not only our spiritual lives but also how we live each day. I have been inspired to become a better wife, mum, daughter and friend.

I am grateful for God's patient guidance.

Loong Cuiwen (Singapore)

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