

Put love in the small activities of each day

“A child bangs a door. I call him or her back - ‘Open the door and shut it softly and say, “Jesus, I love you”.’” Vickie Amugela, from Nairobi, Kenya, is the mother of five children. She has two full-time jobs, schoolteacher and homemaker.

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It is 6.35 p.m. I am walking home pondering what I should write. I reach the door and as I rummage in

my bag for the key, I suddenly realize that the laundry is still on the line...

On entering the house, I long to lie down for a bit. I am just recovering from a viral infection and still feel weak. The children are doing their homework. I cry out “Hi Alvaro! Please close the window.” I leave my bag on the bed and the vegetables I’ve bought in the kitchen. I wash my hands and start preparing the dinner. “Whose turn is it to have a bath?” “Me,” says Joe. “Alvaro, have you had a bath? Wow! What a mess on the table! Clear it up! Gloria, draw the curtains.” “Mum” says Lisa, “the teacher gave us a Kiswahili lesson to read to our parents.” “Okay,” I reply, “why don’t you read it later to Dad.”

It is not always easy to be a homemaker, but coming into contact with the spirit of Opus Dei has given me a point of reference to know what to do at each moment. What

does St Josemaría say about this? A child bangs a door. I call him or her back – “Open the door and shut it softly and say ‘Jesus I love you.’” Or a child hurts itself and I say “Offer this up to Jesus for ...”. I didn’t come up with this – I took it from the founder of Opus Dei. He used to say: You will not lack opportunities, in the small and ordinary things around you, of showing your love for Christ.

Eventually dinner is ready, the children eat and then say the Rosary. I decide to check the school uniforms for the next day. Joe’s shorts are ripped from end to end. I put them aside for mending – the pile gets bigger. I realize that something as trivial as looking for the correct color thread to mend a tear can be important. And so on. When I’m about to throw away a sheet of paper, I realize the other side could be used as scrap paper, and so I

discover what Christian poverty is. The list is unending.

My first encounter with St Josemaría was a film of a get-together with him. What struck me was his cheerfulness, his big-heartedness, his sense of humor. Now his words, teachings and way of life have really helped me to change. I hope the same will happen to all my family and to many others.

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