

The joy of God's gifts

Eduardo Feschenko works for the Central Bank of Paraguay that had signed him up for a training course in New York. But there was a problem: the First Holy Communion of his daughter...

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Eduardo Feschenko is of Ukrainian descent and he lives in Asunción. He is a supernumerary of Opus Dei. He is married to Lourdes and they have 7 children. An economist by profession, he works at the Central

Bank of Paraguay, where, besides analyzing numbers and statistics, he tries to help his colleagues to improve their doctrinal and religious formation. But in order to understand the real focus of his life, it is necessary to look elsewhere: his family.

Tell us about your lightning trip from New York to Asunción and back to New York?

I wanted to teach my daughter something she will never forget. I wanted her to realize two things: first, that First Holy Communion is something very important, and second, no matter what, her father would accompany her, even though the date of the First Communion was really bad for me because the Bank had paid for me to attend a training course in New York precisely at that time. So one weekend, when the course was halfway through, I

escaped quietly. I went to Asunción on Friday – it was an "escape" almost like in the movies – and I reappeared in New York on Monday morning. Thank God, my absence passed unnoticed. (He laughs). Naturally, I had to run a lot and I had to pay for the extra trip, but I think it was worth it.

How did you get in touch with Opus Dei?

Well, I got to know the Work in my second year at the National University of Asunción, through a classmate who invited me to join the Economics Club. That was in 1990.

What made you want to join?

Upon meeting the Work, I realised that there was a group of people and friends in whom I could trust and who tried to help me in various aspects of my life. Afterwards, I learned other things about the

Christian life which made a very positive impact on me.

Which aspects of your life have changed since then?

Basically, I have decided to live my Christian life with more depth, that is to say, to know God more.

In your office, do they know that you are of Opus Dei?

Yes, several people know it.

What is their reaction when they know that you are a member of Opus Dei?

They ask me a lot of questions, because they have their doubts and they are also badly informed about the Work. Others have a healthy interest to know the Catholic faith and the spirit of the Work a little more...

I understand you are giving catechism classes in the office...

Yes. We used to have classes on Catholic Doctrine at the Central Bank after office hours. After work, a few of us remained with some friends to talk about the truths of the Catechism of the Church. That went on for two or three years, but that activity has now been moved to a center of Opus Dei.

How did the opportunity to give these classes come up?

From conversations I had with several colleagues, I realized that the classes would be helpful, and they themselves also understood their importance, so they readily accepted my invitation to start the classes.

How does your Christian formation help you in your work and at home?

Ah! Let's start with what is most important. At home, my Christian formation helps me to take more seriously the attention I give to my wife and my children. I have to make an effort to do that well. Then in the office, it really helps me not to remain only on the human plane, because a mere human aim is not good enough. But when it comes to doing the work for God, this gives me a lot more serenity and happiness.

What was your impression of the founder of Opus Dei, St Josemaría?

What impresses me most is his fidelity in fulfilling the divine will, and his great spirit of service towards the people who lived with him and all the others who would come to the Work in the future. Also how he strove to give us the help we needed to be able to understand this vocation, which leads us to seek

holiness in the family and at work, with our friends!

Do you think that he is really a modern saint?

Yes, absolutely.

In what has St. Josemaría helped you?

He helped me to find greater peace and joy in my life, through striving to understand the will of God a little bit more. And that gives me a lot of peace in my daily activities.

Some say that Opus Dei is rather aloof. Would you agree?

I think that information is incorrect. I try hard not to show that attitude, because I'm very interested in talking with people, so that I can spread the correct ideas about the Work. So far, none of my colleagues or friends has told me that directly.

Why did you choose to have many children?

Because, firstly, I see that that is the way I fulfill the will of God in my life, and then, because the gifts of God bring me a lot of joy. Although sometimes we get very tired physically, we recover with a good night's sleep. (He laughs).

How do you maintain a balance between your work and your family?

I would say that I try to apply a reasonable standard in terms of the number of hours of work. That way, if one day I have to work overtime, I try to compensate for this another day by finishing my work earlier, but in general I try put in eight hours of work a day.

Do you think you can really achieve holiness through your family and work?

Yes. I absolutely believe it is possible. In the Work, I understood that the call to holiness comes from God but it also depends on our willingness to respond to it and our commitment to go ahead in order to attain it.

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