

A book restorer who found his “Way”

Carlos Bordolli of Uruguay recounts his journey from atheism to faith, begun when a coincidence brought St. Josemaría’s “The Way” into his hands.

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J. Carlos Bordolli Fattoruso, binder and restorer of books:

What can I say about Msgr. Escrivá and Opus Dei? I can't begin to put it into words without first giving a bit

of my history. I was born in the year of Maracaná, on the day of Maracaná. (Ed. Note: Uruguay beat Brazil in the 1950 World Cup finals at Maracaná, a 200,000 seat stadium built in Brazil for the tournament.) They baptized me in front of the Uruguayan Soccer Association, in the Parish of Cordón, at the moment of the final party. It was all orchestrated by my Italian grandmother, Dofia Annunziata Molinari of Fattoruso. But in my parent's house, they had closed the door on God.

I grew up in an atheist home, where God was written and thought about with a lower-case letter and Mary was simply the name of a few relatives. I finished my studies and began my work life having had only fleeting contacts with the Church and religion: my baptism, two cousins' first communion, and a wedding. I got married on May 17, 1972, and today I am the father of two children

and grandfather of two grandchildren.

I have great devotion to Msgr. Escrivá because of his words, his work, his philosophy and his intercession in my life. In 1986 my younger son contracted a rare and serious illness: polimiositis. The efforts of the neurologist and of the pediatric oncologist were unsuccessful. My only hope for him and my family was prayer. My plea to Msgr. Escrivá was heard. Today my son leads a normal life and is 27. From that moment my respect became devotion and I began to consider him a saint.

As a binder and restorer of books, hundreds and thousands of volumes pass through my hands: literary classics, Bibles, catechisms, and many other books. In 1976, a small book called *The Way* caught my attention. While fixing its

deteriorated pages, I was also skimming over its paragraphs.

I'm a regular workaholic, so I couldn't help but notice the emphasis the book gave to the theme of work, above all the need to work responsibly and cheerfully. To tell the truth, the book spoke to me – I thought it was right, even though I couldn't see the reasons why. I soon got a copy of the book for myself and studied it deeply.

Each day we open our eyes and we face the world and its challenges: our various duties, our relationship to those around us and to our family. Cultivating our spiritual life and our devotions are the responses we give to those challenges. If we do it responsibly and cheerfully, staying on an even keel, we can reach the end of each day with a small goal completed – which is no small accomplishment in our brief time on

earth. And then if we also manage to pass this faith-giving spirit on to others, we will truly have fulfilled a cause worth fighting for.

In summary: an atheist, a workaholic, encounters the message of Monsignor Escrivá, adopts it, follows it and puts it into practice. In an extreme crisis he casts out a desperate plea and receives an answer that completely reaffirms the connection between human faith and the divine. From then on his life is a permanent fight: to be better, to be an example, to be enriched spiritually, to make it through the daily task of being a professional and living with humanity ... so that some day his children can repeat the poet's verse: "My father was a good man."

Account taken from the book "St. Josemaría and Uruguayans," published in Montevideo on the occasion of the centennial of the

saint's birth. The volume collects 65 personal testimonies from Uruguayan members and friends of Opus Dei, recounting the impact of the teachings of Opus Dei's founder on their lives.

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