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Finding God in Medicine

Xochitl Donis, a pediatrician, teacher and mother of a family in Guatemala, recounts how finding a prayer card of Dr. Ernesto Cofiño at the beginning of her university studies led her to find God in her daily work and life.

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In 2003 I entered the Faculty of Medical Sciences at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala. I eagerly began my first-year studies, with

classes on basic sciences, anamnesis and the doctor-patient relationship.

That same year I came across a yellow prayer card that caught my attention. I have tried to remember exactly where and how this took place. I think it was in a bookstore that I went to with my parents. This discovery had a much greater impact on my life than I imagined when I picked it up off the counter. I am sure that God, at that moment, wanted me to encounter Dr. Ernesto Cofiño.

I was just beginning my medical studies, so when I read that he was a doctor I was surprised, and I decided to keep this small card on my study table. I well remember seeing under the photo of Dr. Cofiño the following words: *The Servant of God*. I understood this as referring to his profession, and saw that through medicine Dr. Cofiño was serving our

Lord. Years later I understood the full meaning that the term Servant of God has for the Catholic Church.

Medical students spend long hours sitting at their desk studying and my case was no exception. I especially remember the long nights trying to understand anatomy, which for me was quite a challenge. So I would go to the Servant of God, Dr. Ernesto Cofiño, and pray the prayer on his card and ask for the favor of passing the exam and the year. Without a doubt, Dr. Cofiño interceded for me and I graduated as a Physician and Surgeon.

Dr. Ernesto Cofiño, who is considered the father of Guatemalan Pediatrics, worked at the San Juan de Dios General Hospital. My life is closely linked to his, since I continued with my Master's studies in Pediatrics in that same hospital. I remember very well walking through the corridor of

the Pediatric section with a department head one day while he spoke to me about Opus Dei and suggested that I go to one of its Centers. It was a whole new idea for me, but after thinking it over I decided to go to Kayac, where I was warmly received. I began to go on Saturday afternoons, and found it wonderful to be able to be in the oratory and talk with Jesus. I truly think Dr. Cofiño interceded with God for me so that I could get to know the Work and better understand that, through my work and ordinary life, I can sanctify my life just as he did.

In my final year working at the Hospital, a group of people came to film a documentary called: “Ernesto Cofiño. All Can be Saints.” I watched from a distance as they interviewed renowned pediatricians and filmed the joyful children, who despite their illnesses always had a smile on their face. The documentary highlighted

Dr. Cofiño's strong defense of life, with his deeply supernatural and human outlook.

Later, now married and working as a pediatrician, I decided to go to Dr. Cofiño's intercession to ask for the favor of finding a job that would allow me to harmonize my life as mother of a family and a pediatrician. Thanks to God and the intercession of Dr. Cofiño, I was offered a teaching position in medicine, which is another wonderful job that Dr. Cofiño himself carried out in his own life.

I continue going to the center of the Work, since it has been a light for my path. During these years I have come to know more fully the message of Saint Josemaría and have found in my dedication to my home and my teaching an opportunity every day to serve my neighbor and thus to love God. I see my vocation as a gift from

our Lord that I received through his
Servant, Dr. Cofiño, to whose
intercession I continue to go
frequently.

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