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# Just Like Jewelry: Sanctifying Daily Work

Sergio, an artist living in São Paulo, Brazil, shares the path that led him to discover the true value of his work and how to sanctify it.

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I would like to share a personal testimony about my work.

My uncle, Father José Antônio Macedo, once remarked: “Only those

who know how to be happy here on earth will be happy in Heaven.”

I had always found it hard to be happy on earth, since we always have our sins and imperfections. When things seem to be going well, a loved one dies and we are left alone, or we lose a job or are short of money. This world was never meant to be a place for a comfortable peace. We will always have a fire to put out, right to the end of our life.

I was born in 1974. I am the fifth child in a family of six. Four sisters came before me. After me, almost six years later, came Fernando.

My mother noticed, even in the first two years of my life, that I didn't respond to stimuli, such as the words “look at that car” or “look at that little bird.” I didn't look at people either. I was in the habit of looking away from them. I looked down, or in any other direction. Looking at

someone face to face was embarrassing for me. Even when looking at myself in the mirror I had the same feeling of unease and shame.

I was brought to some psychologists, always in the company of my parents, especially my mother. At first they thought it could be cerebral palsy, but it was finally diagnosed as an emotional pathology. My mother was distraught; she didn't even know what emotional pathology meant.

Anyway, in 1977-78 I started treatment with a psychologist. I began sessions with her while my mother waited outside. I started school in 1978, at the Tagarela Kindergarten (it no longer exists). Very few limits were put on our behavior there. At times I became very agitated. I even pierced several bags of beans in the supermarket with my finger, so that the beans

poured out and ran like waterfalls. I also broke some neighbors' toys, as well as clay models made by schoolmates.

In early 1979, at the age of 4 and a half, I started talking. This surprised my therapist and my mother. A year later, I learned to read and write normally, without being behind my classmates. My teacher even claimed that I learned faster than the others did.

My performance in high school was average, I hated studying. I only liked drawing and making models out of paper. I built cities, airplanes, helicopters, traffic signs, always with one focus: paying attention to the detailed mechanisms of these objects. I built model helicopters, where the propellers rotated like a weathervane. I dropped the helicopter from the terrace and it went down gliding and turning the

propellers like a parachute, as it slowly fell to the ground. I realized that the pitch angle of the propeller blades, among other imperfections, influenced the helicopter's performance.

In 1993 I started studying Architecture and Urbanism at the university, until July 1998. I am not working in these fields professionally now. I work making prototypes for jewelry and sacred art, and 1/12 miniatures. I've also worked for Gulliver Toys, making prototypes of action figures. I love working with my hands and making miniature sculptures.

Thankfully, my manias started to fade over time. As an adult I can say that I got rid of practically everything that burdened me. Only what is good is left. I've greatly improved my artistic skills, such as sculpting and producing miniatures.

In 2015, I stopped looking for work in the wrong places. just chasing money. I finally looked at myself and said: I'm going to do what I love and what I have mastered: miniature art for collectors anywhere in the world, and high-quality art such as jewelry.

In July 2015, I joined the International Guild of Miniature Artisans and in 2017 I obtained an Artisan Membership qualifying certificate. Thanks to this certificate, doors have opened automatically, just as airport doors open when you arrive. I won clients from abroad, including a wealthy prince in the Qatar Royal Family, well known in the field. It was icing on the cake! It enabled me to participate in fairs abroad and sell my art anywhere in the world.

When I look inside myself now, I have finally come to understand what it means to be happy even here

on earth. What changed was my focus. Everything started to happen of its own accord, without stubborn efforts to look for a job in markets that didn't suit me.

Scripture says: You cannot serve God and money. How true! God wants me to share in in His own creative art. And that's how I feel now: a co-worker with Him, in the right place and doing the right thing.

Photos: @sergiomnetto