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St. Josemaria Taught Me How to Work with Love

On June 26th, 1975, Ana Lorente happened to be in Opus Dei's central headquarters and on that day, she took a series of final photos of St. Josemaria, for posterity's sake.

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In 1965, Ana Lorente came to Rome to work, at St. Josemaria's request. A nurse by profession, she also specializes in photography. For 10

years she took photos of various activities, encounters and large get-togethers that St. Josemaria had during that time. On June 26th, 1975, she happened to be in Opus Dei's central headquarters and on that day, she took a series of final photos of St. Josemaria, for posterity's sake.

Can you tell us some details of June 26th, 1975, from your experience of that day?

I was working in the photo-lab with some technicians, when at 12:30 the telephone rang: an urgent call asking me to come immediately. Excusing myself, I accompanied the technicians to the door telling them that something had come up.

When I asked what had happened, they gave me the news: the Father had just died, he had gone to heaven. My mind blocked up. My place of work was very close to the house

where St. Josemaria was living, and all the others working in that house had already heard the news I had to return to the laboratory, where I was working on a bunch of photos of the recent trip of St. Josemaria to Venezuela, because we were preparing a publication on the catechesis he gave in Latin America, in 1974 and 1975. For a moment, none of it made sense to me...

Who asked you to take photos of St. Josemaria at that moment?

Don Alvaro called and asked us to go and take pictures in Our Lady of Peace, which is where they had brought the body of St. Josemaria - there were already people praying there. His face was glowing, and the peace that it transmitted was mesmerizing.

It was generally pretty difficult to take photos of the Founder of Opus Dei, because he didn't like to be the

center of attention; after 3 or 4 clicks of the camera, he would always say, "that's enough". I took photos of him for 10 years. It almost always ended with an indication or a look that left no room for contesting.

But on June 26th, I found myself in Our Lady of Peace, taking photos from one side and the other, with nobody telling me to stop. It was like another shock for me, along with that smile on his face. Seeing me and Helena Serrano (the other photographer), Don Alvaro told us, "The Father would have liked you to take these photos". I always knew that St. Josemaria had confidence in us, but I never realized to what extent.

¿Has St Josemaria influenced your life?

To say that he has influenced my life would be an understatement - I learned everything from him, even

in terms of material details with no apparent importance. He didn't like "chapuzas" - that means things done without thinking, without putting one's mind to it, without love, as he used to say. For example, one time I did something rapidly with the hope of finishing early, without revising it. He gave it back to me and, with his caracteristic handwriting, he had written "Let's not make 'chapuzas' - this is where we find the 'intringulis' (or 'essence') of our holiness".

Is there something that you are especially grateful for?

I'm thankful for his affection, and for the amiable way of life that he transmitted even while pushing us to be better. For example, in reference to the anecdote I mentioned earlier, once I had redone that particular project, he wrote me again, this time saying, "Thank you, you have done

this very well - you know how to sanctify your work."

One final memory?

For his Aragonese way of being, he didn't like to show affection in a visible way. I remember one occasion when he asked me if I could take ID photos of him for a legal document. Don Alvaro came with him and distracted him a bit so that he wouldn't make a "camera face", because if we spent too long on it he would become serious. But when we did these same photos for Don Alvaro, it was St. Josemaria who was telling him jokes so that he would smile.

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