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Strathmore and Saint Josemaria

Strathmore School, the first multi-racial school in Kenya, started in 1961 under the encouragement of Saint Josemaria. Prof. David Sperling, founding principal, talks about the beginnings of the school and his personal recollections of Saint Josemaria.

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Strathmore School was started in 1961 under the guidance and encouragement of Saint Josemaría

Escrivá. Once he got to know the educational problems facing Kenya at the time he was very keen that members of Opus Dei with their friends and colleagues would do something to alleviate the situation.

He made it clear from the beginning that the School had to be multiracial, which was not then allowed by law in Kenya. He wanted people from different races and tribes to live together, and the College to be open to non-Catholics and non-Christians too. This approach was completely new and succeeded in spite of many difficulties which were overcome with his encouragement and with the hard work of the people who started it.

Saint Josemaría said that "this will be the first time for such a center to be started in Kenya, an institution that will not take into account racial differences: whites, blacks and

Indians will be together. All our Centers are open to everyone. We are all the same. There is only one race, the race of the children of God.”

Strathmore started as an A-Level college offering Forms 5 and 6 [the final two years of high school] with eight staff members and a total of sixty students: Africans from various tribes and five Europeans, two Indians and eleven Goans. In 1966 Strathmore started offering Accountancy qualifications. In 1977 it began a secondary school (Form 1 to Form 4) and in 1987 a primary school. All these educational initiatives were located on the same campus in Lavington. With the help of the Kenya Government and the European Union, Strathmore School of Accountancy moved to the Madaraka campus within the city of Nairobi in 1993 where it merged with Kianda Secretarial College and in 2002 became the present

Strathmore University. Strathmore School remains on the Lavington campus.

In the video below, Prof. Sperling speaks more at length about the beginnings of Strathmore and his personal recollections of Saint Josemaria:

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