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How can I combine work with care for my family?

During his recent stay in the Congo, the Prelate visited the Monkole Medical Center, just outside Kinshasa. A woman on the housekeeping staff asked him an important question.

09/08/2011

Hello, Father; my name is Matondo, but everybody calls me “Mama zii.” I am a cooperator of Opus Dei; I work in the housekeeping staff here. I'm

very happy with my job, and take pride in my work.

The formation I receive in centers of Opus Dei places a lot of emphasis on the family. In the domestic services of the hospital, we try to have a family spirit in the service we carry out. I very much appreciate this, and knowing that this comes from Opus Dei's spirit, we want to thank you for it.

Also we have a gift for you. It's a depiction of a farm woman on her way to work, with a hoe on her shoulder, a basket on her head, and her child on her back. In this way it combines professional work and family life.

-Thank you very much.

-I'd like to ask you two things, Father. First, a question: What advice do you have for those of us who can't bring our children to work, the way that

woman can, but would like to be able to make compatible our work and family like her?

Second, I'd like to ask a favor. As you can see, those of us who work in the domestic staff have come to this get-together wearing our uniforms even though the work day is over. We would like to have a photo taken with you.

I think that can be arranged. Yes, it's very important that in your families (and they're part of our family: I love your families a lot!) that you care for your family, that you respect everyone's schedule.

Your work in Monkole and in Erisi is quite hard and demanding, but you don't have a right to return home looking exhausted. Look in the mirror before greeting your family (and you women like to do this) and put on a smile. Then go in, and greet your husband: "How are you, dear?"

As happens in all hospitals, sometimes the staff has to work overtime, beyond the normal hours. For example (although it doesn't happen yet), a moment will come when transplants will be performed here, and sometimes you might get home late. If this happens, be thoughtful for those at home: call your husband, or wife, and tell them: "Something important has come up that requires my assistance, so I'll be back a bit late; but I'll be keeping all of you very much in mind." And offer our Lord that delay for your family.

It's important that Monkole also be a family, just like the family you have at home. Help each other to live the schedules throughout the day.

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(08/14/2025)