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On the Front Lines Fighting COVID 19

Henrique Pinhati is a doctor in Brazil and a specialist in infectious diseases. He speaks about how he is trying to live a special charity in his work now.

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We are all going through a period of special stress because of the new disease that is assailing the whole world: COVID 19. I am a medical doctor and a specialist in infectious diseases. My work involves coordinating the efforts of two

hospitals and giving guidelines for the treatment of patients.

The effort to sanctify our work that we try to live in Opus Dei has helped me immensely in this time of crisis. Right from the start, the first line of battle was trying to help people manage their anxiety, especially that of the health-care professionals.

I always remember the teaching of our Father [Saint Josemaria] that we need to speak the truth with clarity, but also with charity and affection. Hence the first thing I have done is to study the problem deeply in order to be well prepared technically; thus I can give the correct information with competence and clarity. But this information needs to be passed on to people with affection, always trying to bear in mind what I am saying, to whom I am saying it, and how I say it. The goal is to serve people by

being strength for some, comfort for others, hope and patience for many.

I have noticed that many professional people are especially sensitive and receptive to the transcendent dimension in life. One of the resolutions I made and try to put into practice is something very simple that I read in Gabrielle Bossis's book *He and I*—that people need to hear the word “God,” for this does them great good.

So in my written memos or in conversations with people, when saying goodbye I add “God be with you,” or “I’m praying for you,” or “I’ve asked other people to pray for you,” or “may God watch over you.” Also, of course, I have tried to pray frequently and by name for people and to remember them at Mass, when I can take part in the Holy Sacrifice.

I am certain that God has reserved for this trying time many graces of conversion and of greater closeness to Him, and that it will be a great opportunity for the spiritual growth of many people.

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