

The Ascension Weekly

December 10, 2017

“My Testimony: Why I Became a Religious Education Catechist”

In this issue we conclude our three-part series of parish catechist testimonials. We are so grateful to all of our catechists for the time and effort they take each week throughout the school year to help in the religious formation of the children of our parish.

Cynthia Moneke, Catechist, Grades Pre-k/K

When I first began assisting with CCD (last year), I first saw it only as an opportunity for service learning hours. That has changed so much. This year (2017-2018), I am one of the assistant teachers so I actually plan out my lessons for the kids and then Mrs. Maria gets the other half of class for her plans. Assisting with the pre-k and kindergarten class is such a joy as I believe that it's better for the children to learn about their faith at a young age. Yes I am a child myself, but I think that makes it even easier to be able to teach the kids because I understand how they learn and what would be interesting so the information stays with them throughout the years. People may think that it would be stressful balancing high school, being a senior altar server, and teaching religious education, but as I plan on Saturdays, it brings me peace and even a hint of excitement thinking of the kids and how well the lesson will go the next day. I'm extremely grateful for this opportunity because I couldn't imagine having CCD just out of my life forever just because I've been confirmed. I hope to continue throughout my years of high school and grow as a teacher and a Catholic.

Debbi Jones, Catechist, Grade 2

I have been a catechist for nine years now, and it is so very rewarding. I teach the second grade First Communion class. I love working with the children

and teaching them about their faith. I like to say I am leading my little ones on their faith journey. It is a big time commitment, but each year when I see them go up to make their First Communion I know it was time well spent. I am not a teacher so I was a little nervous to take on the task at first but after praying on it God led me to take it on. It has not only been a faith journey for the children but for me as well. I hope others in the parish will consider this vocation.

Alex Centeno, Catechist, Grade 6

I have been a parishioner since 2006, and that is also the year that I began to get involved in various ministries in the parish. The one ministry I have consistently been a part of is the Religious Education program. I teach the 6th grade and have thoroughly enjoyed the growth and development of my students. I feel fortunate to be able to teach the 6th graders, in particular, because I find it to be an age where they become curious about subjects that will be impactful throughout their lives. I find that by this age, they are much more aware of their individual free will and their responsibilities, so it becomes an opportunity for me to teach them, not only the fundamentals of the Old Testament and salvation history (the principal subjects of 6th grade Catechism), but also the application of the teachings of the Church and the importance of living our Faith. Their developmental stage has provided me opportunities to field questions from them about contemporary moral issues in our society that they come across in school, as well as to discuss the Transubstantiation, and the reality of the Eucharist as the Real Presence of Christ, which, as Saint John Paul II reminds us, is the “source and summit of our faith.”