

Why should I consider being a Catechist?

By Michael Tebbutt, CCD Regional Coordinator, Central Coast

As baptised Catholics, we are called to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and one of the most rewarding ways to fulfil this call is to be part of your parish team of catechists, who minister to the children of the parish who attend the local government schools, both primary and secondary.

Those already participating in this ministry began for a variety of reasons, apart from the fact that they were called to share Jesus' ministry by virtue of their Baptism. Some of the reasons these people will give when asked why they become catechists are:

- to answer a need in the parish,

- children more than ever, need to hear the Good News of Jesus and need to encounter good role models of faith,
- to educate the children in the Catholic faith or
- to pay forward what their teachers gave to them.

But why do they continue in this ministry, for some people for 25 years or more? These catechists will tell you that they have learnt so much about the Church and have deepened their relationship with Jesus by working with the children in the classroom or that it is because of the joy they receive in seeing the students respond in faith through their actions and their prayers. Others will tell you the support they receive from their fellow catechists encourages them to continue when things become a little more difficult or that the support they received through the training and faith formation provided by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) enables them to continue to be a witness for Jesus.

“But I am not a teacher” is often the response given when asked to become a catechist. That is OK but you are a Catholic who has grown up in the faith and has a great love for Jesus and if you take time to reflect, you will be able to identify how the Holy Spirit is alive and well in your life. If our Father in heaven is calling you to continue the work of His Son, He will not let you fail.

The CCD in Broken Bay will give you all the training and support you need. The training will give you the necessary knowledge about how Special Religious Education is

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organised and the opportunity to develop teaching skills that will enable you to share the Good News in ways that the students will understand and enjoy. This training is presented locally, online or via Zoom.

You do not have to write your own lessons. The *Walking with Jesus* (primary school programme) and *Pathways of Discipleship* (secondary school programme) provide quality lessons with interesting activities and to engage the students. These two programmes come with interesting lessons, relevant background information for the catechist and modern digital resources (PowerPoint presentations) with stories and songs to engage the students.

So, when you hear the Holy Spirit whispering in the ear of your heart to join the marvellous parish team of catechists, remember you will be handing on a 2000-year-old tradition that changes lives and an opportunity to share with those you'll teach, and to share faith with the other catechists.



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