

It's already the beginning of JULY! I have been here a whole month! I cannot believe it! Time flies when you are having a good time!

I have been praying for you and your families, that you will get the rest and relaxation you need this summer to be READY and EXCITED to share the GOOD NEWS of Jesus for Religious Education families this coming school year - 2017-2018.

Have you ever thought about how God called you into this ministry? At this point in my life, I find I keep going back to the beginning (or at least what I see as the beginning - but with God, you know He has been working on me my whole life! lol!)

I was never brought up Catholic, but my sister and I were Initiated in the Catholic Church at 12 and 10 years old- to help save my parents marriage. The joke to me was that it didn't make their marriage better and we only went to Church on Christmas a couple of years after that!

Growing up and into my young adult years, my image of God was as a tyrant and I felt He was just waiting for me to mess up so He could punish me. How could I draw close to that God? I didn't feel any love from God at all.

However, even in all of that, the mess that I was, He was always loving me and calling me into relationship with Him! But in general, I ignored His Holy Inklings!

(This is the short story of my life-really short) - Jump to having children: We put our children in Catholic School - thinking that would take care of the Religious part of our life. And because we didn't really live out a life centered in Jesus the rest of the week, the kids just went along with it. Soccer was really our God (all 7 children played and my husband and I coached and refereed.) Then we got a boat and boating on Sunday became more important than Church.

At one point I needed a second job to help keep our kids in Catholic school, so God provided a part time job helping the Youth Minister at our church with the paper work and chaperones. It worked great for our family. But three months later, she quit and the DRE asked me to stay until they hired someone else. In the meantime, she asked me to attend a few workshops and never hired anyone else and I became the Youth Ministry/ Confirmation Coordinator! (I was definitely not worthy! - God didn't call the qualified (me) but He was working on qualifying me, because He called me) God used this opportunity to call me into action. I have always been a person who wouldn't ask someone to do what I wouldn't be willing to do, so as I asked the teens to know a loving God, I began to re-think my image of God.

I was a slow learner, because I am basically stubborn. God nudged and nudged and I dragged my feet. I was so busy with my full time job, raising 7 kids and now doing this "part time" church job, I really didn't have time to go to mass. I figured I was working for Him - that would be good enough!

After 6 years of that attitude, He got my attention: During this turning point year - I turned 50, my mom passed away and I lost my big salary job as a computer specialist at IBM. What were we going to do? At the same time, the Martha and Mary story began to sink in...I had so totally been Martha, because I thought Mary was lazy! But at this point something needed to change in me! I decided to completely jump in - Trust God with all my heart! I decided to become like Mary "Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42)

I asked Fr. for a full time job (still not being paid much) and God took care of us! I began going to daily mass, taking classes to become a Master Catechist, then I began yearning to understand the Bible better and got my Certificate in Advanced Bible Study. I began teaching the faith to other adults. All of this as a volunteer, while still being a mom of 7 and a Youth Minister/Confirmation Coordinator. I still to this day can't explain how we made it financially....but God was faithful!

My cup overflowed! The Joy of the Gospel became a reality for me! Yes, there were still tough times - but I knew God had a plan and I began trusting Him with every part of my life!

When God led me into deeper waters, I tried to follow! Here I am in Texas! I still can't believe it!

I just know that "In all things God works for the good of those who love Him, and who have been called according to His purpose" Romans 8:28 and that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" Philippians 4:13

Reflecting on our stories of God helps us to see Him in every part of our life! It actually helps us to not worry about tomorrow and see the joys of TODAY!!!

What is your story of God? How has God been working in your life?

I pray that as you reflect on your story of God, you will see how much He truly loves you! He has a great plan for your life and is calling you to share that love with others! Our families need to hear this HOPE for their lives! If we don't share it, who will?

Thank you for being a Catechist/ Aide/ Parent - bringing all those whose lives you touch - closer to Jesus! As you continue to grow, take time for God - no matter how busy you are with other things....remember Mary and Martha -

"Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42)