

This will be my fourth year as a catechist. What has happened to me is that I have been changed and continue to be changed by this work.

It is wonderful to belong to a community that knows the religious dignity of the child. The Biblical affirmations of this dignity are remarkable!

Our trust in the Lord should be like that of a weaned child asleep in its mother's lap. (Ps. 131)

Young David singled out in preference to his brothers.

The high point of messianic prophecy -- the birth of Emmanuel. (Isaiah)

The Son of God becomes a little child -- newly born in a manger, presented in the temple, obedient to his parents, and yet mysteriously independent of them in his dependence on the Father!

Jesus as an adult -- his attitude toward children is so great! Not only does he bless them, but they become the symbols of the genuine disciples. "It is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." (Mt 19) "Little ones" and "disciples" seem at times to be equivalent for Jesus.

There are so many references in scripture -- you just keep finding them. I think to be a catechist means to serve this religious dignity of the child.

In the past three years I have really learned a lot about the power of the Word. It's hard for me to explain, but I know it by looking at some of the pain in life through scripture. I also know it by the power of the rightly chosen word in the atrium. Maybe this is what is meant by the sacrament of the Word.

What it means to be a catechist in my day-to-day life is that I have to really limit becoming involved in lots of other things. It means time spent with bible, materials, and thinking about the children. At first it felt lonely, but now it feels great.

The best part about staying a catechist is knowing the children of the past three years and watching them grow. I can see how good and holy they are. It keeps me honest and it keeps me faithful.

---Tina Lillig