



NATIONAL CATECHETICAL MONTH: SEPTEMBER 2022

THEME: "The Catechists, Walking Together as Witnesses of the New Life in Christ"

*"All of you who stand fast in the Lord
are a holy seed, a new colony of bees,
the very flower of our ministry and fruit of our toil,
my joy and my crown."*

– St. Augustine

The catechist. The catechist is a professional lover of God. S/he is a holy seed in a family or community after being baptized. With the help of the family and community and the Church, s/he has to grow in faith, love and hope to become a sower of the Christ. S/he is chosen to hand on the faith, to put people not only in touch but to develop a personal relationship with God, to be in communion with Jesus Christ (CT,5) and to be strengthened and sanctified by the Spirit. To be a catechist, therefore is a gift and a life-long task.

The catechists walking together. The catechists always seek the face of God. They manifest an extraordinary passion for the Word of God to be proclaimed and passion for humanity to bring them into the one Church where Christ is the bond of unity of all people and creation. It is in the sacrament of the Eucharist that all believers come together in the sharing of the Word and the life of Christ. For all who receive the sacred flesh of Christ are united with Him as members of His body. The catechists therefore walk together as one body of Christ, the Church.

Witnesses of the New Life in Christ. Every baptized person has been clothed with Christ. The one cloth Christ is our identity, Christian. Just as the one God is a mystery, we too are mystery, not that we know nothing about but we know something, yet there is always more to learn. Through Christ and in Christ, we come to know who we are. Then we need to continuously learn and grow in faith. The catechists value their ongoing formation given and shared in an integral ways. They always long to know, serve and love Him more. They are witnesses because they never stop seeking, listening, learning and living the Christ, the word and works of God.

New Life begins. When a person is baptized, new life begins. We have become sons and daughters of God and of the Church. We entered into a bigger family, healing relationships and promoting authentic friendships must certainly be our mission. The catechists bring the baptized to be in communion with God and with Church. Unfortunately, most often we fail to make the Church a home for the baptized so that they tend to see the Church as an institution open only for few or only for the rich, friends or chosen by priests, sisters and catechists. The catechist becomes the keryx of the life and works of the Church. And so, the catechists bring new life in the



Church every time they prepare the children, youths and adults for the reception of the Sacrament of Baptism and of Reconciliation.

The forgiveness of all past sins. The sacrament of baptism and Reconciliation unites us with God through Christ in the Spirit. The joy of the baptized and the renewed Christian is the joy of the catechists and the Church. In St. Augustine's words, we become "new colony of bees that produces sweet honey, the very flower of our ministry and fruit of our toil." In so doing, the catechists strive to renew their commitment through unceasing prayers, daily reception of the Sacrament of the Eucharist and regular confession.

Risen from the dead. The hope of the resurrection is sure and certain because we have received the sacrament. A sign of this reality happens every day in our lives: overcoming our struggles and pains in our ministry, in our family, in the community and even in our life journeying together as catechists in our parish or in our diocese. We have been buried with Christ into death in order that as Christ has risen from the dead, we too may rise and we have been given the pledge of the Spirit.

Walking in newness of life. We are now walking by faith, still in pilgrimage but every step we take is directed to Christ. Let us therefore seek the things that are above, set our hearts on heavenly things, not the things that are on earth. It is then that we can say with the apostle, it is no longer I who lives but Christ lives in me. And when Christ, our life appears, and then we too will appear with him in glory.