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Maryvale catechesis certificate program feeds participants spiritually

Kristie Unterseher

Jesus Christ is Risen! Alleluia! It may seem strange to begin with the Easter chorus a few months into ordinary time, but, as John Paul II says, "We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song!"

For some Catholics, however, this does not always feel true. In fact, for most of us, especially those in ministry, it is easy to lose sight of the "good" part of the Good News. Personally, I find myself giving so much to the church that I actually forget the joy of knowing Christ. In her wisdom, the church knows our need to continually be reintroduced to our savior, Jesus Christ. Pope Paul VI says that the church "always needs to be called together afresh by him and reunited."

The church knows that if we are to reach the world for Christ, we must maintain our own joy and zeal for him. Something that has helped me maintain my joy is participating in the Maryvale Certificate in Catechesis course. This course allows me to be fed spiritually and refresh my relationship with Jesus Christ and his church.

Presented through the Maryvale Institute of Birmingham, England, it is a distance learning course that helps Catholics know and share their faith. It will be offered in Grand Forks and Fargo starting in January 2012. Space is limited to the first 25 applicants.

Focused on bringing all people into intimacy with Jesus Christ through catechesis, the course helps participants develop a relationship with Christ through the Catholic faith and provides practical ways of sharing Christ with others. With an average of five study hours per week, the course is easy to manage but still challenges participants to grow.

When I learned about MCC, I was not sure if it was an option for me because I am not a parish catechist. My pastor encouraged me to apply anyway and I am so grateful that I did! For me, one of the most rewarding aspects has been the relationships I have formed with classmates and professors. Another outstanding aspect has been to deepen my own spiritual life and understanding of my Catholic faith. I can now answer questions on the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ, the church, Mary, sacred Scripture, liturgy and sacraments, prayer and so much more.

My catechetical practice has been greatly enhanced by my new appreciation of different methodologies and I am secure in the knowledge that it is Christ that I share with others when I talk about our Catholic faith, and not myself. I wish to draw people into a relationship with Christ, not into a relationship with just me.

The Maryvale Certificate in Catechesis course is a two-year distance learning course that includes four study days per year, during which participants come together to receive instruction and build relationships with others in the program. These relationships have increased my zeal and desire for the Lord.

I recommend the Maryvale Certificate in Catechesis program to anyone interested in diving into the depths of the Catholic Church, no matter how they are involved in parish life, but especially if they work in catechesis.

For more information, contact Katie Dubas, the Diocese of Fargo's director of evangelization and catechesis, at (701) 356-7908 or katie.dubas@fargodiocese.org.

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