

## A catechism for Tots

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11/29/2009

I am a mother of eight wonderful gifts from God. My passion is writing and illustrating children's books. Like most parents our children from

an early age asked my husband, Kamau and I deep questions about God, “Who made me, Mummy?” or “Dad, why can’t I see God?” “My First Catechism” seeks to help parents to answer some of these questions” I must acknowledge the greatest gift God has given me is my faith in Him. My vocation to Opus Dei has helped me see that I am a child of God and that being a mother is one of the most important loving tasks in this world. I want to serve my God with the talents He has given me.

When I attended my first retreat in 1985, my life was transformed. I learnt that we are all called to be saints. I found myself going to a retreat every year after. I wanted to learn more and more about God and how I could grow closer to Him. Today, I am what I am because of the formation I have received from Opus Dei. I have learnt how to abandon myself totally to God, asking Him for

the grace to always do His loving will. My husband has been a wonderful example to me because of his love for God and his family.

The catechism for tots started off as one of my book projects, but soon became a family project. My husband and our children got involved in this exciting venture. Our Children Bakhita (16), Anuarite (14), Bakanja (13), Kalemba (10), Josemaria (7), Maria (5) and Zita (3) showed a lot of interest as I illustrated the pictures. In the book the children are known by their nick names, Chichi, Cheri, Mr. B, Kam, Jose, Marie and baby. Jose then five years old and Marie who was only three, kept asking me where they were in the illustrations. They wanted to be able to identify each family member in the book. In the end I had all seven children illustrated in the book, Raphael (9 months) had not yet been born. I

tried to involve all the children in this family project. Some of them posed for me as I did the illustrations, others helped in the colouring of the pictures. My husband gave his helpful views and insights. Today Jose and Marie read their first catechism with a lot of interest. They love to identify themselves, but most importantly they now know more about God.

The greatest challenge for us as parents is not just to teach children the “way”, but to live it. St. Josemaria in his book, “Christ is passing by” writes, “If I were to give advice to parents, I would tell them, above all, let your children see that you are trying to live in accordance with your faith. Don’t let yourself be deceived: they see everything, from their earliest years, and they judge everything. Let them see that God is not only on your lips, but also in your deeds; that you are trying to be loyal

and sincere, and that you love each other and you really love them too." The greatest joy as a mother is watching the children not only growing physically and intellectually, but also spiritually. The greatest gift God has given us is our faith. God made us to know him, love him, serve him and be happy with him in heaven when we die. A child who understands this great mission from an early age is at a great advantage because his or her focus on God is clear right from the start. A child focused on doing only God's will has the hope of being with God forever after this life. My husband on the way to school every morning, gets the children to answer questions from the catechism. There was a lot of excitement among the children as they struggled to get the questions right. I take over in the evening as I collect the children from school listening to their adventures in school. Family life with God as the

centre is a wonderful adventure  
because God is always there to help.

Rosemary Kamau

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(02/10/2026)