

Baptism by Fire: Adapting to the New Normal.

The month of February 2020 was a good month, a month like any other. Well, perhaps this is not entirely true as 2020 is a leap year which made February longer by one day, a big deal for those born in a leap year. But I digress. My name is Njoki a Cooperator of the Work, this is the month I was introduced to Francy, a lovely young lady who is a 2nd year Law student at Strathmore University.

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Our meeting was planned and I was to take Francy through the Catechism of the Catholic Church to prepare her for the sacraments of Christian initiation. I vividly remember our first meeting as she is naturally friendly, bubbly and chatty. It was easy to strike up a conversation right away. She also instantly wanted to know when she would be baptized. I found her enthusiasm very encouraging as she was eager to embark on the journey.

In the following month, March 2020, COVID-19 hit our part of the world and we went into a lock-down. By this time we had only had two meetings with Francy. Due to the unpredictability of the situation we quickly adapted to the online learning as the rest of the world was

doing and continued meeting weekly. Our preferred mode of meeting was via the zoom platform which worked quite well for us.

This turned out to be an exciting experience for both of us as we adjusted to a rather unfamiliar way of doing things. We occasionally had a few interruptions, which were very welcome, from Santana, Francy's 6 year old brother. He was not convinced that his sister was actually attending class and so he would pop in during the sessions to see the 'teacher' and say hello beaming his huge toothless smile.

Our sessions progressed well over the months that followed, for some of the classes, I would share reading material in advance for Francy to prepare and she would then take me through the selected topics which would be followed by an interactive

session to delve deeper into the subject.

We were able to conclude the classes in the month of August 2020. Francy received the sacraments of Christian initiation on 26th September 2020 at Our Lady Help of Christians Shrine, Don Bosco and the excitement kept building up as the day approached, the day she had been longing for was finally here! Her loved ones were present on the D-day and they included her mum, her brother Santana who recognized my face immediately from the zoom sessions, her aunties, cousins and friends. It was indeed a beautiful day.

Preparing the classes was a good refresher of the teachings of the Catholic Church for me as well. The reference materials that I used were *A Question Answer Catechism by J Babendreier, P Castiella & P Mimbi*

and *The Faith Explained* by Leo J Trese.

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