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Genesis: Joining the Family

With the encouragement of Amarachi and the aid of an app Genesis, a 3D programmer, finds his new Home in the Catholic Church in Lagos.

08/27/2022

One Saturday in the middle of 2021 Fr. Tobe arrived in *Ojumo House*, an apartment we use for formational activities in Lagos with someone new: Genesis, a 3D programmer. He introduced us and I understood that **Genesis wanted to be taught**

Catechism classes in preparation for Baptism. Genesis and I agreed on a time for our meetings. We also agreed to vary the venue. I was curious about his work, and as I wanted to know what 3D programming was, he was happy to explain, also showing me samples of his work. I was impressed!

Our first class was at his home, a spacious and cozy place he shared with two friends. Our class went smoothly. Afterwards, he invited me to dinner, a dish named *giz-dodo* (gizzard & plantain in sauce) fancy name yet very nice. With a high resolution anime film playing in the background, we ate and chatted freely.

Subsequent classes were online. From time to time we met in-person to chat and resolve his doubts and fears. Sadness resulting from life's ups and downs and sometimes losing

sight of Our Lord occasionally interrupted his desire for the classes. The classes became irregular. At some point, our plans for Catechism appeared to be irreparably broken. None of us tried to see or hear from each other. However, **we didn't stop praying and others didn't stop praying for us.**

Our guide for the class was the *Mini Catechism app* (available on *Google Play*). The goal was to cover the curriculum yet emphasizing certain topics: e.g., the Creed, Sacraments & Commandments.

Still the preparation wouldn't have been effective without the support of Genesis's friend Amarachi. Although Genesis had always admired the Church, it is **she who inspired him to strike up a conversation with the *Bride of Christ*, and subsequently to seek Baptism.** Her efforts to live a life consistent with

her Christian values rekindled within him the conviction that some goods were immaterial transcending the physical reality. Amarachi accompanied him to Mass, guided him through the liturgy, taught him the devotional prayers and helped him memorize the Creed. With support and personal study, in no time, Genesis was 'good to go'!

Fast forward to when I informed him that he had passed his catechism test, and that he was to be baptized and to receive Our Lord on Ascension Thursday. It was a mix of excitement and nervousness. Getting his white dress for the ceremony involved some drama. For Godfather, he chose his Catholic secondary school classmate and friend Peter. It was an easy choice. Prior to meeting Amarachi, had he been asked to name any Catholic in his life, that Catholic would have been Peter. A medical doctor by profession:

articulate, simple, conscientious; Genesis wasted no second in nominating as Godfather. He chose the baptism name Philip, in honour of the Apostle whose feast day was May 26, the date for the baptism.

On the anticipated day, we beat Lagos traffic well in time for the ceremony, which was very solemn. Many times he repeated the spiritual communion, an act of his faith in and deep desire to receive Our Lord.

He was so full of gratitude at the end of the ceremony, for the great love Our Lord had for him. The event ended with many pictures, joy, peace and a renewed desire to love God and all men.

Emmanuel

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(06/21/2025)