

Little Sprouts in Hong Kong

Tak Sun organize catechism classes for students

05/17/2001

It is Sunday, and just a few minutes before 10 in the morning. Emmanuel, Charles and Louis have a brief meeting in one of the classrooms of Tak Sun in order to finalize the details of the catechism class they are going to give. Emmanuel, Charles and Louis take part in the activities of Granite Study Center, a cultural center for university students and

young professionals of Hong Kong. One of these activities precisely consists in helping out in the teaching of catechism classes, organized by Tak Sun Primary School for students.

Tak Sun has around 1,200 primary school students. Every year, at the beginning of the academic year, the students are invited to participate in some classes of catechism, called “Little Sprouts”, which take place on Sunday mornings. The majority of the boys who join are Catholics, but there are also a good number of non-Catholic pupils who, with the permission of their parents, participate in the classes. In Hong Kong, of the 6 million inhabitants only 4.1% are Catholic.

In this city, the parents give a lot of importance to the education of their children, and their religious education is not an exception to this

rule. It is not rare, therefore, that the parents also become directly interested in what their children learn in the class. Some of them even decide to attend some sessions of catechism, which are organized specifically for them. These classes are also held in the school and at the same time as the classes for children. Eventually, some parents embrace the Faith. In Easter of 2000, for example, a boy and his mother received Baptism in the same ceremony. And very recently, in Easter this year, two entire families were baptized together.

This year about 120 boys are attending the “Little Sprouts”, Catholics and non-Catholics. Ho Chun Hin, 8 years old, and Chan Lok Shun, 11 year old, were received in the Catholic Church in Easter of this year. Also, among those who were baptized was another fellow from a

school nearby. He has also attended catechism classes in Tak Sun.

Among the catechists, some come from Catholic families, but many others are converts. Emmanuel, Charles and Louis have something in common the fact that they have been converted to Catholicism when they were going through their university studies. Emmanuel, in Hong Kong, where he graduated in Environmental Science; Charles, in Australia; Louis, in England, where he was studying Mechanical Engineering in the London University.

The classes of catechism finished at 11:00. Afterwards, the catechists attend with their students the Holy Mass in the Chapel of the Holy Family or in the school hall. At the end of the Mass, nearly 12:00, there is always some time to talk to some parents. Before leaving, the

catechists meet again in order to prepare the classes of the following week.

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