

Companions On The Journey...

Damian's Story: Thanks be to God he brought me home

Although baptised into the Anglican faith as a baby, my exposure to, and knowledge of, any religion was very limited up to age 22, when my life started to change for the better. At age 22 I met a girl who was a practising Catholic which surprisingly didn't really worry me. Although I always had a respect for religious beliefs, I never had any interest in religion myself.

In the beginning of our relationship I never attended Mass and we rarely discussed religion. I had many misconceptions about what being a Christian meant, and thought life as a Catholic would be a bit restricting and boring. After spending some time with Joscelyn and her family I started to realise my thoughts and feelings about being a Catholic were changing as I found these Catholics were good people and great fun to be around, not at all leading the restricted or boring life I had imagined.

Going to church with Joscelyn and her family for the first time was a decision I made for myself; I certainly had never expected to go. The experience was different and I felt awkward at times but it sparked an interest in me and so I started to do some exploring and went to Mass on other occasions.

After my first experience of Mass I started having regular conversations about faith with Joscelyn and researched everything Catholic on the internet. I spent a lot of time reading about every topic I could think of concerning the Catholic Church and even bought and read a bible. Boy was that a hard book to tackle!

By this stage I felt I had a reasonable understanding of the Catholic faith and was attending church more often. I also found that I was having little problem believing most of the things I was reading about and was always wanting to learn more. God was well and truly leading me home.

On the way to work one morning I noticed a message board out the front of a church inviting people to Catholic Enquiry Evenings. I read this message every morning for maybe a couple of weeks and eventually it got the better of me so I mentioned it to Joscelyn. She didn't know much about it but was willing to go with me.

I found the evening interesting and the people friendly. I remember having read about the RCIA on a Catholic website, but that night I learnt what the RCIA really was and what it involved. I had a feeling I would go through it at some point in my life but at this time I was just not ready to take that leap of faith.

A couple of years later I married Joscelyn in the Catholic Church and by this stage I considered myself unofficially Catholic, attending Mass every week, praying and really enjoying my new found faith. One day my wife pointed out a notice in the bulletin advertising the RCIA Enquiry Evenings again and this time I knew I was ready for it.

I started the RCIA process and went to all of the weekly meetings with Joscelyn and her parents. We all learnt a lot, even the life-long Catholics, and we made some great new friendships too. The RCIA journey helped me explore my faith further, introduced me to the local parish community through special ceremonies, helped me to interpret scripture readings and view beliefs in different or more open ways. The process was worthwhile and a good introduction to the Catholic faith

It has been an enjoyable journey and I feel God has filled an empty part of my life. Thanks be to God -he brought me home!

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