

Always Innovating

■ KIM LASINSKI

Youth Minister at Church of
St. Michael and St. Peter,
Syracuse, New York

Nominated by: Bonnie Barker

Highlights from Kim's Nomination:

Kim has been in catechetical ministry for 16 years, since her teens. Besides being the youth minister and coordinating and teaching Confirmation, her DRE writes, "I do not know what I'd do without her." Kim's very savvy using current technology and social media to connect with youth.

She also works with her DRE to upgrade classroom technology and find new ways to evaluate what works best. Plus, she writes new curriculums and helps to lead an innovative week-long Bible-based summer camp, Bible Land Adventure, for preK through sixth grade. This multi-generational adventure brings children together with teen and adult volunteers and includes a family celebration at the end of the week.

Catechist talks with
Kim Lasinski:

What's the best spiritual book you've read?

The best spiritual book I've read is the Book of Ruth from the Bible. It has been such an inspiring example of how "day-to-day" faith can be just as transformative and amazing as performing miracles.

Besides attending Sunday Mass, what spiritual practices are helpful to you?

I love to pray. I love to pray with my kids especially. I listen to all the things that they pray about, and it gives me an incredible perspective on life and priorities.



Kim Lasinski

Who is your favorite saint and why?

My favorite saint is St. Elizabeth of Hungary. She was queen, but we don't remember that about her. We remember her for unwavering faith and service to the poor. She is

another example of "day-to-day" faith changing the world.

Who has been the biggest influence on your faith?

My parents have been an incredible influence on my faith. Faith was not something that was dusted off on Sunday and then put away; it was a natural part of our family dynamic. There wasn't ever a question of going to church and serving. The question was always how we were going to serve the church community when we got there.

What's the most challenging topic you've taught, and how did you

teach it? The most difficult topic that

I've taught

is social morality.

Often teenagers have a low tolerance for things they perceive as unjust or hypocritical, and our world is full of societal contradictions. The kids and I talk about how Jesus taught by example. He came to change the world, but he didn't do that just by preaching to everyone and letting that be enough. [His] most profound teaching moments came when he lived what he was preaching. The times when he stepped outside of what society decided was normal and did what was just are the lessons that we remember most. We talk about the things that they can

do in their daily lives to bring about change. ... Not just to think about "What Would Jesus Do," but to turn that into the action: DO what Jesus would do.

Could you share a teaching tip?

Don't get trapped in the lesson plan, and invite the Holy Spirit into your classroom. Sometimes a kid is going to go "off script" and ask you a question that needs to be answered. Those "off script" classes have the power to change lives.

YOUTH MINISTER

