

The journey of our faith is one rooted in convictions.

Last Sunday as I watched a little boy playing on the drums as we sang the recessional hymn, I was taken back in time to my own childhood. On Sunday mornings I would be woken up at 5:30am to prepare for mass at 6:30, on Tuesday evenings I would tag along with my mum to St Anthony of Padua Guild meetings, Saturdays I was at Legion of Mary meetings with my aunt and on some Sunday evenings, you would find me also clapping, dancing and singing praise to God at Catholic Charismatic Renewal meetings. At that age, I was just following the motions and enjoying the company of older people who would give me candy.

Fast forward to my days in university when I was no longer under the covering of my parents and far from the direct oversight I once had. I was free to make my own choices. I could decide to sleep in on Sunday mornings and attend mass at 8 instead of 6:30am or maybe skip service the entire semester. I am grateful to God that didn't happen – there was a dynamic, thriving youth ministry in the parish on campus providing numerous avenues for accountability and opportunities to deepen faith through fellowship with people in the same stage of life with similar challenges, people who were asking the same questions I had and who actually understood me.

As the years advanced, I was entrusted with leadership roles and I saw many young people come into the youth ministry and literally like the story of King David in the cave of Adullam, emerged as strong-willed individuals full of love for God and man. Convictions were birthed in the faith that at one point were considered “their parents” but suddenly they owned. With this background you can understand why I stand before you today. Why I accepted the invitation from Fr. Val and Amina to share a few words about the United in Faith Campaign. The funds that will be raised will meet the diocesan needs and also the needs of St Patrick, one of which is the youth ministry.

We acknowledge that the pandemic has come with many challenges over the past years, but God is faithful. The committee only encourages us to rely on God's grace and prayerfully consider how we can each support this important vision with our monetary resources and unceasing prayers. Like God asked Moses, He asks each of us, “what do you have in your hand?”

- Emmanuella Wadie