

## Buzz

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### Discipling Former Catholics

"We're not trying to 'force' people away from Catholicism," says **Tim Lott**, involvement minister at **Community Christian Church (Plantation, Florida)**. "We just want to answer their questions, and provide a safe place to ask them."

Lott's "**Growing Up Catholic**" class—a three-week Wednesday-night elective offered at Community Christian—grew out of his own experiences as a lifelong Catholic who began attending the Christian church as an adult. After becoming a Christian in 1998, he served as a volunteer, and later as a staff member, at **Northeast Christian Church (Louisville, Kentucky)**.

"People who had been raised in the Catholic faith visited Northeast, and they were searching for answers," Lott says. "I started the class there as a way to meet that need. After joining the staff at CCC, I realized the need is everywhere."

Lott developed the class's curriculum; he includes discussion of Communion, confession, purgatory, saints, and baptism and wants the closed-door sessions to be safe places. "I am careful not to disparage any religion," he says. "But I *am* upfront about differences in theology, and about the history of the Catholic church—things I didn't learn until I questioned Catholicism as an adult."

He also asks class members to share their particular situations, needs, and reasons for attending. "For those who grew up Catholic, the faith goes very deep," he says. "Sometimes people experience anger or sadness, and often they are the only non-Catholic member of their extended family. We give them time to share their thoughts."

Lott closes the class with the challenge for each person to identify—and take—a next step. "That might be baptism by immersion, or some other decision," he says. "Everyone journeys through the process differently."

