



NEWS ARCHIVE:

## Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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### ***Darlene Cooper is rural catechetics coordinator for Eatonia Deanery***

Darlene Cooper is ready and eager to support catechists working across Eatonia Deanery in the southwest corner of the diocese.

As the diocesan rural catechetics coordinator for the deanery, Cooper's role is to provide support and resources to parish volunteers and pastors who are teaching the faith to the next generation .

"I am really honoured to be able to get to know the people in all the parishes of the Eatonia Deanery and to meet all of the unsung heroes out there: all the parents and volunteers, the moms and the grandmas who are stepping up to the plate. I'm so humbled by their gifts of time and talent," says Cooper.

As a mother who raised three children in the small rural community of Foam Lake, Cooper recognizes the challenges and blessings of being a parish catechist, responsible week in and week out for teaching children their faith – something she did for many years.

"I can really relate to the joys and struggles in these smaller communities. I understand what it means to have two or three students. We live by that model in small towns," she says.

Cooper, who recently moved to Saskatoon, began working with the diocese of Saskatoon in the development office earlier this year. When the Eatonia Deanery position opened, she was delighted to take on this new role as well.

She is now getting to know the deanery, making road trips and meeting people "face to face."

The support of other members of the diocesan rural catechetics team has been phenomenal, she notes. It is also important to recognize the great leadership that exists in our small parishes, adds Cooper. She herself acknowledges the inspiration she received when she was mentored by another parent in her parish community: Cecile Halyk of Foam Lake.



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Cooper says her goal is to let parents and volunteers know that they are empowered with the gifts needed to become teachers and leaders in the faith.

“I can relate to the parents who are trying to do this for their kids. I’m just a regular mom, and I’ve struggled too, wondering if I had what it takes to teach catechism,” she says.

“But in today’s world, in these times... never before have our children so needed to be rooted in Christ. By giving them this faith, it’s the one rudder they will always have to help them navigate the challenges of everyday life.”

Cooper will be working with Eatonia Deanery parishes at Burstall, Dodsland, Eatonia, Eston, Fox Valley, Kindersley, Lancer, Leader, Liebenthal, Marengo, Prelate, and Richmond. Cooper can be reached by calling the Catholic Pastoral Centre at 1-877-661-5005, or by e-mailing: [ruralcateatonia@saskatoonrcdiocese.com](mailto:ruralcateatonia@saskatoonrcdiocese.com)

For more information about the diocesan Rural Catechetics program, which is funded by the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, please visit the diocesan website at: [www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/ruralcat/index.cfm](http://www.saskatoonrcdiocese.com/ruralcat/index.cfm)

