

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at St. Joseph Church 2020-2021

Parent Information Session
August 27, 2020



*The Lord is my shepherd,
I have everything I need.*

Psalm 23:1

Agenda

- ▶ What is Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)?
 - ▶ COVID-19 impacts
- ▶ 2020-2021 Plan Overview
- ▶ Health and Safety: In-person and Remote
- ▶ Formalities and Legal Stuff
- ▶ Calendar preview
- ▶ Closing thoughts

What is the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)?

- ▶ Based on Montessori Method and principles
 - ▶ Respects the developmental stages of the child
 - ▶ A **prepared environment** (atrium) that enables the child's independent growth and development
 - ▶ Specially designed **materials** for the child's work
 - ▶ The child's **personal time** and space to work leads to discovery and absorption of the message
- ▶ Developed over 60 years of observation of the response and needs of the child
 - ▶ Age 0-6: Need for loving relationship (the foundation for moral formation)
 - ▶ 6-9: Need for social relationships (understanding of justice)
- ▶ Importance of spiritual relationship built through **prayer**
- ▶ Two pillars: Bible and Liturgy
- ▶ The True Teacher is the Holy Spirit!

CGS in a COVID-19 Environment

“Like all forms of life, religious life needs a prepared environment in order to develop and flourish. We want to prepare an environment which corresponds to the vital religious need of the child, a place where the child can experience religious life and can come to know the realities which feed this life. (p 4) Like the environment of the Church, [the Atrium] is a place where the child can listen to the proclamation of the Good News, meditate on it and begin to live it according the child’s own rhythm. It is an environment where work easily becomes meditation and prayer.” (p 5)

Listening to God with Children, Gianna Gobbi

- ▶ Health concerns for families/volunteers and restrictions make holding nominal atrium sessions unfeasible
- ▶ CGS will support the Domestic Church by providing resources for at-home family-based catechesis
 - ▶ Primary source for these resources will be from the CGS National Association, which may be found on the USCCB* list of COVID-19 resources
- ▶ A limited number of children may participate in-person for First Communion preparation only

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*

Supporting the Domestic Church through (primarily) Family-based formation inspired by CGS

- ▶ The **Prepared Environment** of the home
 - ▶ Prayer “corner”: Prayer table kits to be made available
- ▶ **Materials:**
 - ▶ Packets of some materials for home use to be made available monthly
 - ▶ Suggestions for at-home materials to be provided
- ▶ **Personal Time** and Space:
 - ▶ Dedicated time/space in the home for
 - ▶ Approximately an hour per week
 - ▶ Family contemplation of topics which will be provided
 - ▶ The child’s personal work - *the majority of the time spent here*
 - ▶ Prayer
 - ▶ Option for family-time in the atrium

The atrium “is not a place of religious instruction, but of religious life.”
- *Sofia Cavalletti*

Plan Overview: Monthly Theme

- ▶ A new theme to be introduced each month
 - ▶ Will follow/relate to the Liturgical Calendar (Ordinary Time/Advent/Christmas/Lent/Easter)
 - ▶ Age appropriate guidance to be provided on the theme
- ▶ Monthly Parent Zoom Session
 - ▶ ~First Sunday of the Month at 4:30pm
 - ▶ Introduction/kick-off of **Monthly Theme**
 - ▶ Guidance provided for how to explore the theme at home
- ▶ At least monthly emails providing
 - ▶ Detailed age appropriate guidance for weekly exploration of the theme
 - ▶ Supporting materials/resources for use at home
- ▶ Monthly take-home packets for children enrolled in Levels I/II
 - ▶ CGS “handworks” related to the theme
 - ▶ Pickup at church on the Sunday Parent Zoom Meeting day
- ▶ September 13th Kickoff - Theme: Prayer

Plan Overview: Level Specific

- ▶ ALL: Weekly sign-ups for (optional) family time in the atrium
 - ▶ Time for children to enjoy working with the materials
 - ▶ One hour intervals (45 minutes of work; 15 minute cleanup)
 - ▶ Wednesdays 9:00am-5:00pm
(potential for additional days/times based on demand)

- ▶ Level I (age 3-5) Weekly Zoom Prayer Time
 - ▶ @20 Minutes of Prayer/Song/Sharing
 - ▶ 7:00pm Mondays

Plan Overview: Level Specific

In addition to weekly “home atrium” reflection, prayer and personal work:

- ▶ Level II for 1st and 3rd Graders:
 - ▶ Bi-Weekly Zoom Reinforcement:
Tuesdays at 7:00pm @40 minutes
 - ▶ Outdoor group activities on church grounds (at least one in October)
 - ▶ Tentatively Wednesdays, 5:00-6:15pm

- ▶ Level II for First Communion:
 - ▶ Nominally weekly in-person Atrium Sessions:
5:00-6:15pm Wednesdays*
 - ▶ Supplement by personal work at home
 - ▶ Participation in selective Zoom Sessions:
Tuesdays at 7:00pm @40 minutes
 - ▶ Special First Communion Preparation sessions (5) and retreat (TBA second half of year)

**To minimize potential contact, shortened sessions, and will seek to leverage Zoom and outdoor activities when feasible*

In-Person Health and Safety

There are three situations where In-Person health and safety are of concern, and specific measures apply. (General guidelines follow.)

1. In-atrium Family Sign-ups:

- ▶ Atrium to be used by a single family unit at a time - masks required
- ▶ Catechist/Aide on-site - masks to be worn whenever together
- ▶ Parent/Guardian responsible for placing materials used on cart for cleaning prior to subsequent use
- ▶ Parent/Guardian to assist on-site catechist/aide in post-use cleanup

2. Level II First Communion children will be assigned a work space and provided individual “handworks”

- ▶ Participation will be limited to 5 children
- ▶ Any “communal materials” used will be cleaned or placed on cart for cleaning following individual use
- ▶ Will follow all other masking/sanitizing/distancing protocols

3. Level II Outdoor Group Activities

- ▶ Masks required

In-Person Health and Safety

CGS In-Person Guidelines will be followed which have been developed in accordance with Archdiocesan guidelines, including:

- ▶ Hand sanitizing upon arrival
- ▶ Mask use expected whenever non-family members are present
 - ▶ Drop off/pickup procedures
- ▶ Safe distancing and masking to be practiced
 - ▶ Personal work spaces designated for Level II First Communion group
- ▶ Disinfecting frequent-use items (doorknobs, etc.)
- ▶ Bathroom use in emergency situations only
- ▶ Parents are responsible for monitoring their children's health:
 - ▶ Stay home if experiencing any symptoms and/or fever
 - ▶ Parents expected to take temperatures prior to arrival
 - ▶ Notify us of positive test results so we can inform potentially exposed individuals

Remote Health and Safety

▶ Zoom Guidelines

- ▶ Archdiocesan guidelines will be followed
 - ▶ Two adults who have completed Safe Environment checks will be present on the calls
- ▶ Sessions or portions of the sessions may be recorded for later viewing
 - ▶ Parents may turn off video
- ▶ Please be respectful and cognizant of appropriate appearance and background noise

Formalities and Legal Stuff

- ▶ Thank you for pre-registration sign-ups that helped with our planning/preparation
- ▶ Please complete formal **registration** prior to first session
- ▶ The Archdiocese requires that a waiver/**release** be signed for all in-person activities. (i.e., First Communion, Family Sign-ups, Level II Group activities)
- ▶ Additional permission form for **recording** of Zoom sessions

All forms available for downloading on the [CGS page](#) of the St. Joseph website and may be returned to cgsstjoseph@comcast.net.

Tentative Calendar

Parent Zoom Sessions (Sundays at 4:30pm):

September: 13-Sept
 October: 4-Oct
 November: 1-Nov

December: 6-Dec
 January: 3-Jan
 February: 31-Jan

March: 28-Feb
 April: 11-Apr
 May: 2-May

Atrium Family Time Sign-Ups

Wednesdays 9:00am-5:00pm: 7-Oct through 26-May

No Sign-Ups:

25-Nov (Thanksgiving)
 30-Dec (Christmas)

Level I

Children Prayer/Share and Song Zoom Sessions (Mondays at 7:00pm):

Weekly Sessions: 05-Oct through 24-May

No Sessions:

28-Dec (Christmas)
 05-Apr (Easter)

Level II for Grades 1 and 3

Children's Bi-Weekly Zoom Sessions (Tuesdays at 7:00~7:40pm):

15-Sep	10-Nov	5-Jan	2-Mar	27-Apr
29-Sep	24-Nov	19-Jan	16-Mar	11-May
13-Oct	8-Dec	2-Feb	30-Mar	25-May
27-Oct	22-Dec	16-Feb	13-Apr	

Outdoor Group Sessions (Wednesdays 5:00-6:15pm): 14-Oct (*Rain date: 21-Oct*)

Level II for First Communion

Children's Atrium Sessions (Wednesdays 5:00-6:15pm):

Introductory Session: 23-Sep
 Weekly Sessions: 7-Oct through 26-May (possible alternative Tuesday Zoom sessions)

No Sessions:

25-Nov (Thanksgiving)
 30-Dec (Christmas)

Occasional Zoom Sessions (Tuesdays at 7:00~7:40pm):

15-Sep	29-Sep	13-Oct	<i>Additional sessions as alternative to Wednesdays to be determined.</i>
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First Communion Preparation:

5 extra sessions to begin during Lent, concluding with a retreat
Schedule to be determined

Closing Thoughts

- ▶ CGS is volunteer and donor based
 - ▶ Minimal cost to St. Joseph (atrium materials on loan)
 - ▶ Catechist commitment of 90+ hours of formation training per CGS Level
 - ▶ Any support you can offer is welcome
- ▶ Appreciate patience and cooperative spirit as we work through this unprecedented year
 - ▶ All new - (not included in the training!)
 - ▶ Adjustments may need to be made along the way