



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)

Newsletter – November 2019

Communications/Reminders

➤ “Field Trip” to tour the Church

Please have your children dress appropriately for walking to/from the church/atrium for these sessions:

- Tuesday November 19: please drop off your children off at church. (Pickup as usual at the atrium.)
- Sunday November 24: the children will be escorted to church once the 9:00am Mass lets out (around 10:00am). Please pick your child up at church.

➤ Level II First Eucharist Announcement/Intention Mass

- All families are invited to attend this special Mass on Tuesday November 19 at 4:30pm. Our Level II children will be participating with a particular focus on the children desiring to receive First Eucharist this year. Parents of First Eucharist children should plan to attend.

➤ Thanksgiving Break

- Tuesday November 26th and Sunday December 1

➤ Christmas Pageant

- Your children in K thru grade 3 are invited to participate in St. Joseph’s Christmas Pageant. Practices begin December 1st at 2:00pm. Look for a future parish email.

Did you know: What color will the priest be wearing and why?

You can predict what color chasuble the priest will be wearing based on the Liturgical Calendar, which tracks important dates in the church year. Similar to our family calendars, the Liturgical Calendar marks important days in the lives of the Saints and (most importantly) Jesus. The liturgical calendars in both our atria are like puzzles with pieces for each of the Sundays of the year which are placed in a circle, like a clock. Three pieces, like hands on the clock, point to the three principal feast days which relate to the life of Christ: his birth (Christmas), resurrection (Easter), and gift of His Holy Spirit (Pentecost). The Sunday pieces are painted indicating the liturgical color for the season:

White – during the Feasts (Christmas and Easter)

Purple – before/when preparing for the Feasts (Advent and Lent)

Green – after the Feasts (Ordinary Time)

Red – Feast of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost)

(Note: You can be sure it is Ordinary time if the priest is wearing green, and Advent or Lent if the priest is wearing Purple. There are other Feast days (and sacraments) when white may be worn. Red is also worn on feast days of the martyrs.)



November in our Atria

Our Level I children continue to explore the many articles, vestments and gestures of the Mass, and will visit the church to enjoy the beauty of the real articles. Realizing that the greatest gift in Salvation History is that of Jesus Himself in the Eucharist, our Level II children will be planning their own Mass (Nov 19) for those in the group preparing to receive their First Eucharist later this year.

Level I Atrium (pre-K/K) Spotlight - Preparation of the Chalice



Our Catholic tradition is rich with symbols and signs. Being able to “read” these symbols/signs helps to unlock the mysteries of our faith and tradition, making our spiritual and liturgical lives more meaningful. The practical life activities of pouring water from one container to another, help to prepare the children for working with the materials to ponder some of the meaning behind the Preparation of the Chalice.

First, the children prepare our cruets by pouring water and wine into them. Next, a glass chalice is prepared by filling it with wine, then adding just a little bit of water. Seeing this happen, we wonder what this might mean? Realizing the wine represents God (Jesus) and the water represents us helps in our understanding. We wonder why so much wine and just a little water? What happened to the water? Can it be seen or separated back out? What could this water and wine mixed together tell us? The children typically respond “Because God is so big/He is everywhere/He is all around us/He is in us”! Quite a mystery to ponder together!



Level II Atrium (1st/2nd Grade) Spotlight - Eucharistic Presence of the Good Shepherd

Since the beginning of their time in the atrium, the children have worked with the Good Shepherd materials, pondering the great love the Good Shepherd has for His sheep as he leads them under his protective care to food and drink; and how He will search for any stray sheep until he can rejoice upon finding them. The children take comfort and joy in knowing this unconditional love of the Lord!



Using our sheepfold and with this image in mind, we think about how our Good Shepherd invites his sheep to a special meal where they can be with him in a special way. A second sheepfold is set out with a miniature altar, chalice and paten where the Good Shepherd leads the sheep. We realize that the special food and drink offered are Jesus, Himself: His body in the form of bread; His blood in the form of wine. What does he offer us? All of Himself! We remove the Good Shepherd figure knowing the sheep are still in His loving presence in the form of consecrated bread and wine.

Who does the Good Shepherd call to the altar? All his sheep – everyone around the world! As we replace the sheep with figures of people, we rejoice in knowing that the children, too, are called to share in this special meal and await the time when they will receive their First Eucharist!

For the Home

Celebrating the Liturgical Seasons at Home

- When at Mass, point out the colors the priest is wearing to your child. What season is indicated?
- Use the appropriate Liturgical Color on your family prayer table. (Change from green to purple on the first day of Advent – December 1.)
- Ask your child if he or she remembers the words to the Liturgical Colors song. Enjoy singing it together in the car on the way to church or to the atrium.
- Look for the large Liturgical calendar including all the weekdays that will be displayed at church soon. Look to see if their birthday falls on a feast day, or find the feast day for the saint they are named after. What color will be worn on the anniversary of their baptism?

Asking God for His peace and blessings,
St. Joseph's CGS Team