

Presentations Given to Children

Level I atrium (ages 3-6)

Prayer is at the center of the Atrium: Individual Prayer, Communal Prayer, and Work as Prayer.

Scripture...

- ❖ Infancy Narratives, Biblical Geography, Prophecies
- ❖ Paschal Mystery: Last Supper, Empty Tomb, City of Jerusalem
- ❖ Parables of the Kingdom
- ❖ Parable of the Good Shepherd and the Found Sheep

Liturgy...

- ❖ Liturgical Colours and Calendar, Vestments of the Priest
- ❖ Seasonal Celebrations, including the Liturgy of Light
- ❖ Gestures of the Mass
- ❖ The Eucharistic Presence of the Good Shepherd
- ❖ Baptism, presented through liturgical signs

Each new level builds on the elements presented in the previous level in a spiral method, returning always to the same essential themes but with new detail and discovery reflecting the development of the child.

New elements in Level II (ages 6-9)

Scripture...

- ❖ Synthesis of narratives and parables given in Level I
- ❖ Addition of moral parables and the maxims of the Kingdom
- ❖ Further reflections on the Good Shepherd, the Wolf and the Hireling, the Found Sheep and the Eucharistic Presence
- ❖ Meditation Series on the True Vine Parable
- ❖ The Books of the Bible

Liturgy...

- ❖ Synthesis of the Eucharist
- ❖ Origins of the Eucharist
- ❖ Synthesis of the Rite of Baptism

History of the Kingdom of God...

- ❖ A cosmic meditation on the three great moments of time: Creation, Redemption and Parousia, and on the immense gifts of the Kingdom: the unifying narrative for Level II

New elements in Level III (ages 9-12)

Scripture...

- ❖ Old Testament Typology Studies
- ❖ The Prophets and Prophecies
- ❖ Miracles

Liturgy...

- ❖ Detailed study of the parts and prayers of the mass, the ordinaries and the propers, and further meditation on each element
- ❖ The Bible and the Sacraments
- ❖ Detailed consideration of the Rites of Baptism and Reconciliation

The Plan of God...

- ❖ Development of the History of the Kingdom of God, including the History of the Jewish People and much more! This interdisciplinary narrative unifies many themes both in biblical history and liturgy.
- ❖ The Virtues

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd:

where a child falls in love with God





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Introduction

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a program of Christian formation for children ages 3 through 12. It begins with the understanding that there is a deep bond between God and each child. Based on the teaching methods of Maria Montessori and drawing on the most essential elements of scripture and liturgy, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd helps children to name, explore and deepen this relationship as the foundation for their lives.

The vision for this faith experience began in Rome in 1954 with Dr. Sofia Cavalletti, a Hebrew Scripture scholar and her co-worker, Gianna Gobbi, a Montessori educator. It has spread internationally.

In the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, the classroom, called the atrium, is a spiritual environment - a place of worship rather than a traditional classroom. It is a place of work that becomes prayer and conversation with God. It is a prepared environment where children grow in the knowledge of Jesus and His love. The work in the atrium prepares them for involvement in the larger worshipping community.

The hands-on materials in the atrium encourage children to explore and deepen their experiences at their own pace. The children are free to work with materials that represent the essence of the Christian message. The adult's role is to prepare the environment; present works that call forth the child's response; then step back, allowing God and the child to work together.

The Training

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd requires training for adults for each level.

- Level I is for children ages 3-6
- Level II is for children ages 6-9
- Level III is for children ages 9-12

Each level of training requires at least 90 hours of training sessions with the following features: lectures, prayer reflections, observations, lesson presentations, materials making, discussions and planning.



"If we want to help the child draw nearer to God, we should with patience and courage seek to go always closer to the vital nucleus of things. This requires study and prayer. The children will be our teachers if we know how to observe them."
Sofia Cavalletti



For More Information:

- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Association of Canada: Catechesis.Canada@gmail.com; <http://www.cgsac.ca>
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Association of the United States: <http://www.cgsusa.org>

