



CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)?

CGS is a Montessori method of religious education that aids your child in forming a relationship with God and His Church. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd was created by a Catholic theologian and Catholic Montessori educator, but is open to all Christians of various denominations.

What is the Atrium?

CGS takes place in the Atrium, which is the designated room for the class. It is a devoted space, prepared with materials that the children use to aid in their meditation of God and the rich truths of our Faith. The space is filled with items that are representative of Scripture and the Sacraments. The materials in the Atrium are size and age appropriate and can include three-dimensional, wooden representations of Bible stories, maps of Israel, and miniature models representing historical events and parables.

What is a Catechist?

The Catechist is the guide or presenter of scripture or part of liturgy to children in the Atrium.

What do the students do in the Atrium?

The Catechist will do a short presentation about scripture or the liturgy that coordinates with our Church's liturgical season. Then the children are given time to ponder and respond to God's message through their "work" which can include use of Atrium materials, art, or silent prayer. The child's "work" is to foster meditation, contemplation, and prayer so that the Holy Spirit may speak individually to the child.

What are the levels of CGS?

Level 1 - ages 3-6

Level 2 - ages 7-9

Level 3 - ages 10-12

Each level has a dedicated Atrium with age and size appropriate materials. Due to the age specificity and volume of materials, Atrium spaces are not shared among levels. In order for the program to run efficiently, each level needs a dedicated Atrium. This means that there should be a minimum of three Atria to offer CGS Levels 1, 2 and 3.

How often do the children attend CGS in the Atrium?

Classes occur weekly during school for St. Gregory's students for preschool through 3rd grade. It is also available on Wednesday nights as part of our religious education from 6:00 - 7:30 pm for pre-k through 2nd grade.

What levels of CGS do we offer at St. Gregory Barbarigo?

Our parish offers CGS Levels 1 and 2 and we have three Atria. We have Catechists trained for Level 1 and 2, but we always need more! We currently do not have any Level 3 trained Catechists or a Level 3 Atrium, but we are praying that we are able to offer Level 3 in the near future.

Where are the Atria located?

We have one Level 1 Atrium in the school, and another Level 1 Atrium located in the parish office. Our Level 2 Atrium is located in the old parish rectory.

Why is CGS important to our parish and school?

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program is integral in making St. Gregory Barbarigo a parish of well-formed Christians. CGS aids our children in developing life-long, personal relationships with God which will continue to deepen as they move through adolescence and into adult life. In short, it is the best way we have found to pass on the Faith to our children.

What do we need as a parish to continue to grow CGS?

Currently, we need individuals to volunteer to help assist in the Atria and to be trained as Catechists. We also encourage parishioners to pray for this ministry and its continued success. Our long term goals include building dedicated CGS spaces in our parish and school and expanding to offer Level 3.

How can I become a Catechist?

To become a CGS Catechist, you will need to complete a training course led by a certified CGS formation leader. The training courses are designed to be "retreat-like" allowing you to deepen your relationship with God and His Church. The style and structure of the training varies so there are options to find a fit that's right for you. All Catechists begin with Level 1 formation and build from there.

Contact the Parish Office (660-582-3833) or visit <https://www.cgsusa.org> to find course options in our area.

How can I learn more about CGS?

The best way to learn about this amazing program is to visit our parish Atria! Information can also be found at the United States Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd website at <https://www.cgsusa.org>.

To schedule a visit, volunteer to become an assistant, or inquire about becoming a Catechist, please contact the Parish Office at 660-582-3833.

