

Catechesis of the GOOD SHEPHERD

“Let the little children
come to Me.”
Matthew 19:14

COMING THIS FALL – CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD FOR CHILDREN AGES 3-6 YEARS OLD!

St. Peter Parish and School is excited to announce the addition of a new program of catechesis. In conjunction with our Catholic School for K – 8, our traditional CCD program for children 1st – 8th grade, and our God Teens program for high schoolers, we will now be offering **Level I Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** for children 3- 6 years old!



Often referred to as **CGS**, this is a beautiful, rich, hands-on method of catechesis in which children enter into a deep personal relationship with Jesus the Good Shepherd. Based on the educational methods of Maria Montessori, this catechesis gives great respect to the dignity of the child and especially the religious potential of the child.

CGS is likened to that of an adult retreat. If you've been on a religious retreat you know that everything in the environment is intentional and meant to help you focus on interior peace and conversation with God.

Likewise, the ordered environment, the beautiful materials, and the peaceful work of the children in CGS gives rise to their contemplating the mysteries of God.

That's right - children 3-6 years old enter into contemplative prayer naturally and with great joy!

The special room in which this takes place is called an Atrium. This room is carefully prepared to respect the dignity of the 3-6-year-old child. We have allocated a space- with the use of modular walls - in Bishop Vasa Hall as our Atrium. In this environment, the bible is enthroned, Sacred Scripture is read aloud, and the children are given time to respond by engaging in meaningful work of their choosing. Many of the materials that the children work with are handmade by the catechists and





relate directly to Sacred Scripture and the Liturgy of the Mass. There are also beautiful and meaningful practical life works requiring concentrated repetition which naturally transcend into contemplation.

Children who attend **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** discover- on their own- who God is and who they are.

Testimony from a mother of 3 boys:

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is so rich and full of beauty! I have seen our boys, typically full of energy and bouncing from one activity to the next, begin to build deep, personal relationships with Jesus through their time in the CGS atrium. One example of the fruits of their CGS experience was made tangible during our extended time together at home, when they were no longer able to attend atrium together because of Covid-19 gathering restrictions. After we had been home for a few weeks, Lucas and Isaac began asking if we could make our own prayer table in our living room. We decided on a table, the boys chose the items they wanted to have for when they make a visit to pray, and they all 3 now use it multiple times a day to pray and slow down their busy bodies and minds. Lucas will often stop and read the Bible to himself, sometimes Isaac and Vincent will ask if they can listen. Other times, Isaac will get a pillow to sit or kneel on while he talks to Jesus in his heart in front of the lit candle. Even Vincent visits to pray, occasionally he picks up his blue rosary to look at before running off to his next activity. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd has helped my boys begin to form a beautiful, personal connection with Jesus the Good Shepherd and it has been a joy to watch as that relationship has carried with them from the atrium into our family home and prayer life.



A grateful mother

In a world full of uncertainty and chaos, CGS offers a time and place of great joy, peace, and celebration for the children as they prepare themselves to enter more fully into the life of the church.

Pre-K and Kindergarten children enrolled in school at St. Peter will automatically be attending a weekly session of CGS of which the cost is covered by school tuition. You need not enroll.

Available sessions for non-school children are Monday or Tuesday 9:00-10:30am and Wednesday 4:00-5:30pm. Sessions are filling up quickly and space is limited. Costs are listed on the registration form.

All sessions begin the week of August 31. **To register for this program or to learn** more, visit our parish website at www.saintpeterslincoln.com/cgs. You may also contact Colleen Smith by email: colleen-smith@cdolinc.net.