

# Our Association takes birth

Dear Members and Friends of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd,

During the weekend of November 2nd-4th the five board members of our newly-formed association met in Washington, D.C. We thank all of you who were supporting us in prayer. None of us felt "equal to the task," but we did feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and were blessed by a sense of unity among us. In our discussions and decisions, we tried to keep in mind the opinions and suggestions which were expressed by each of you who participated in the association-formation meetings in St. Paul this past summer.

The main agenda items we dealt with were:

## 1. The Role of the Center

- After much prayer and discussion, the board reaffirmed the original definition of "the center" (as stated in the meetings in Washington, D.C. in 1983) as being both an office where the main work of coordination and administration is done and an atrium (or atriums) so that the religious experience of children is kept visible and at the heart of all the business we conduct.
- For now, Washington, D.C. is the center and Christian Family Montessori School's atrium is the atrium of the center. The Association and CFMS are thus also financially linked in that ten hours per month of the association coordinator's time are spent in observing in the center's atrium and consulting with the atrium staff in order to insure that the work being done there is truly representative of the work of the Catechists of the Good Shepherd.
- The board restated that the location of the center may change in the future. They also discussed the likelihood of including other atriums in the Washington area as part of the center and so to offer visitors a wider "sampling" of what the work is like.
- The current work at the center includes a "membership drive," correspondence with catechists and others seeking information and advice, establishing a more solid relationship with the Church via the Archdiocese of Washington, printing a directory of members, compiling data on children's responses in various atriums, coordinating training plans, etc.

## 2. Finances and Budget

- Although our financial needs at this point are fairly low and, so far, are being met, we anticipate greater expenses than income in the near future. Thus, we encourage you to send in your membership dues and to encourage others to join. Also, we ask that you pray with us for the right money sources to be made available.
- An annual financial report will be made available at the annual "General Membership Meeting" to be scheduled during the summer courses.

## 3. Regional Centers

- With the printing of the directory, you can learn who is in your area.
- The board will offer help in other ways so that community can be built in the different regions (e.g. suggestions and guidelines for workshops and retreats) with the goal of eventually establishing more formal "regional centers."

#### 4. By-Laws

-We are in the process of incorporating as a non-profit organization and applying for a charter in the state of Maryland (since that is the actual address of the office and atrium).

#### 5. Newsletter and Directory Publication

#### 6. Training

-The board, with Sofia's approval, has drawn up a tentative outline of training courses. They are:

- Course 1 - The 3-6 Cycle
- Course 2 - Conclusion of the 3-6 and Beginning of 6-8
- Course 3 - Conclusion of the 6-8 Cycle
- Course 4 - Sacramental Part of the 9-12 Cycle
- Course 5 - Typology (History of Salvation for 9-12)

The above courses would continue to be three to four week summer courses. Included in the course work will be album making and checking, and an examination of some kind if the participant is seeking "certification."

-The board reaffirmed our eventual goal of also offering "year-round" training as soon as such a program can be established.

-The 1985 summer courses will be in St. Paul again, July 15th through August 2nd. Please see the course announcement on page 26 of this newsletter.

#### 7. Trainers and Assistants

-The board recognizes the great need we have for a larger pool of persons who are prepared to teach or assist in teaching of courses. We are working with Sofia on establishing requirements and training opportunities for trainers and assistants.

#### 8. Materials

-The board restated the importance of material-making as part of the catechist's spiritual formation and the building of community around the atrium (discovering and utilizing the skills of persons in the community). They also recognized the need for clearer guidelines for association members regarding the reproduction and selling of materials and are presently working on such guidelines. For now, we simply ask that you not reproduce or sell any materials in the name of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd without first consulting with the Center.

-The board is continuing to work with Sister Sheila Sentiff on the printing of a catechist's "manual" - a listing and detailed description of the materials.

-We are also working with Sister Sheila and others in the making up of a "travel set" of materials which can be used at the summer courses.



Finally, the board made plans for a General Membership Meeting to be held in St. Paul just prior to the opening of the courses. The meeting will take place at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, July 13th. Please refer to the Summer Announcement page for details. We hope to see many of you there. Also, we encourage you to write to the center:

- to ask for any needed assistance with your work
- to give input on the agenda items discussed above
- and, especially, to share your reflections on your work with the children and their specific responses in the atrium.

With prayers for you, your work, and the building of our community,

*Rebekah*

November 30, 1984

Rebekah Rojcewicz  
Association Coordinator

## INNAMORAMENTO

"Innamoramento" is the name the members have chosen for our association. It is an Italian word which means "to fall in love, to be enamored," and what we are about is "falling in love" with God.

Dr. Cavalletti says, "I think that innamoramento is the basis of religious life, and also of moral life because moral life and religious life are not two different things. If we help the child to establish a relationship with God in enjoyment, in innamoramento, then we have also done the best moral formation of the child. You all know how much psychology now stresses the importance of love in every field of human life. I think that a global innamoramento is possible for everybody before six. It may happen, of course, for anyone at any moment of our lives but before six it's possible and it's easy for everybody. It comes out quite naturally from the depths of their soul. They really fall in love quite naturally.....There are many things to be done after six but there is one thing to be done before six - and it is to help the children to fall in love." This quote is from a lecture, "Catechetics for the Child Under Six," presented at the North American College in Rome, Italy, in 1977.

The calligraphy for our stationary was done by Rebekah Rojcewicz; an example is above.

This past summer 48 catechists met in St. Paul, Minnesota to study with Dr. Cavalletti and Maria Christlieb. We met at the College of St. Thomas for three weeks: 20 participants studied the sacraments for children ages 6-8 with Sofia and 28 people were introduced to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for 3-6 year olds with Maria.

During the courses, meetings were held twice to solidify the actual beginnings of an association. We discussed legal proceedings of incorporation, by-laws, goals for the coming year and, most importantly, how the formation of this association would help in serving the children we work with. The first Board of Directors was elected by those present and they are: Rebekah Rojcewicz, Association Coordinator, Hyattsville, Maryland; Cathy Maresca, Administrator, Washington, D.C.; Carol Dittberner, Secretary, St. Paul, Minnesota; Barbara Kahn, Treasurer, Cleveland, Ohio; Sandi Yonikus, Consultant, Houston, Texas.

It was a busy and fruitful three weeks for all who attended. Our community grows in faith and love for each other as it grows and works "around the child."