

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in the Episcopal Church

By Anna Hurdle

For close to forty years, the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd has been opening the eyes of adults in the Episcopal Church to the hidden richness of Children's spirituality. It has deeply formed adults and children in their faith. From its earliest inception in the United States, there has been a constant Episcopal presence in our association, in housing the national office in Oak Park, IL, at Grace Episcopal Church, as well as having a presence on the CGSUSA Board of Trustees, staff, the International Council and formation leadership in national courses. Additionally, CGS is regularly represented at the Episcopal General Convention and FORMA conferences. When Sofia Cavalletti addressed the participants of the North American Montessori Teachers Association (NAMTA) in 1999, she acknowledged and thanked the Episcopal catechists for their part and contributions to the growth of CGS in the United States.

Much work was done in years past to consider how the Roman Catholic liturgical materials used in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd reflect Episcopal liturgies and teaching. In addressing Episcopal and Anglican catechists at Gather and Grow in the fall of 2022, the Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, and Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves spoke of being formed in the way of love, of creating beings of love. Both bishops spoke of deep formation, where God gets discovered, as one of the keys to the Kingdom. In speaking about the formation of children, the Presiding Bishop used language that sounds very familiar to us. He spoke of a deep formation that may bloom into a flower way down the road, knowing that you (we) may not see it.

In addition to working within and being supported by the larger framework of CGSUSA, Episcopal catechists receive sustenance through a tri-annual retreat called "Gather and Grow" as well as through a monitored Facebook Group: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in the Episcopal Church (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/217766379140692>). Additionally, the majority of CGS formation courses held in the US offer adapted Episcopal presentations and materials as needed. For more information on the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in the Episcopal Church, you may contact Anna Hurdle, hurdle.anna@gmail.com or Karen Maxwell, Director of Formation for CGSUSA, karenmaxwell@cgsusa.org.